

History of
Conway Baptist Church
1905 - 2005





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History of Conway Baptist Church



You are the Potter, we are the clay – Mold us!

This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord. “Go down to the potter’s house, and there I will give you my message.” So I went down to the potter’s house, and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him. Then the word of the Lord came to me: “O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does?” declares the Lord. “Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.” (Jeremiah 18:1-6)

DEDICATION



Our history book project was funded in part with a generous contribution by Stanley Taylor, given in loving memory of his wife, Bernice Leigh Martin Taylor. She was the daughter of Marvin J. and Minnie L. Martin and sister of Lucille Martin Futrell and M. Earl Martin, all members of Conway Baptist Church. Bernice Leigh was a member of our church from 1928 through 1948. Bernice Leigh Martin was born on November 23, 1920, and grew up attending Conway Baptist Church. After high school graduation, she attended Chowan College and Meredith College and enlisted in the US Navy (Waves) in 1944. She

married Stanley Taylor of Jackson on June 7, 1947. The wedding ceremony was held here in the "old" church. Mrs. J. A. Fleetwood provided the music at their wedding. They later moved to Columbus, Ohio, where they raised their family and spent many happy years. Bernice Leigh and Stanley Taylor have three children, Barry Martin Taylor, Ronald Keith Taylor and Jill Annette Taylor. They have also been blessed with grandchildren. Bernice Leigh lived by the high principles and morals that were instilled in her by her parents, her church and her community as she grew up here in Conway. These were traits that she passed on to her children and family.

Bernice Leigh Martin Taylor passed away on Sunday, October 3, 2004, after a long and courageous battle with Alzheimer's disease. She was a gracious homemaker and a devoted wife, mother and grandmother. A memorial service was held at Westminster-Thurber Chapel in Columbus, Ohio. On October 30, 2004, a second memorial service was held here at Conway Baptist Church. The love of this family was evident as they gathered to remember her life. There was also a homecoming feeling as loved ones worshiped at Bernice Leigh Taylor's home church.

Our church family would like to extend a tremendous "thank you" to Mr. Taylor and his family for their generous donation. The blessings of our Lord stretch far and wide. From Conway Baptist Church here in the small town of Conway, North Carolina, to the big city of Columbus, Ohio, He has united us as children of the Father and brothers and sisters in Christ (joint heirs together with Christ!). All praise to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!

Acknowledgements

The history book project became a wonderful experience for me and proved to be a fascinating and very rewarding journey. Its research evolved into a scavenger hunt that began with the uncovering of a wealth of information that was discovered in Z. Smith Reynolds Library at Wake Forest University. Julia Bradford, director of the North Carolina Baptist Historical Collection at the library (in her welcoming way), enabled me to take a trip into our past when she provided access to our boxlike file that held so much information on the early history of our church. James F. Martin's handwritten minutes and original roll book, as well as many other early documents stored in our file at Wake Forest, proved to be invaluable. Mr. Martin single-handedly recorded most of the information that we have for our early days. A great deal of information about our pastors was also obtained from the library's files.

All Scripture references in the book are from the NIV unless otherwise indicated. Please let me apologize in advance for any errors and omissions.

This book began with a compilation of earlier histories written by Mrs. Nita Davis, Mrs. Kitty White and Mrs. Alice Woodard. Information was also obtained from history books of area churches and from West Chowan Association's history book. Carl Witt, local historian, gave us information on our prehistory and recommended that we include memories in our book. We followed his suggestion and many people contributed memories. Some were interviewed by Peggy Davis, Anne White and me and recorded on tape for later use. Other people wrote of their memories and sent them to us. We are grateful to all who helped in any way to make this book special.

A special thank you goes to Alice Woodard, Peggy Davis and Jean Ricks, our history committee (each one essential to the writing of this book), who have done an outstanding job preserving our history, both printed and photographed; to Kathleen Johnson, who worked to put our charter members in "family order," which in itself was a fascinating process; to my family and friends who have patiently listened to me talk on and on about our church history and have allowed me to use my time to complete this book; to Gurney O. Burgess, III, who drew the pen and ink pictures of our stained glass windows that appear at the beginning of most chapters; to Bobby Taylor, who researched our stained glass window symbols which are featured in Chapter 8; to Carol Lowe, who shared her gift of photography so willingly; and to Betty Moore, who graciously applied her editing and proofing skills to this book.

I am grateful and thankful to each one of you and to those in my past who have influenced my life by your sharing of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our history is rich and wonderful, and I am grateful to God that he has put me in this place at this time. This book was written with love and I hope you will find it enjoyable, but first and foremost, I pray that this book will find favor in the sight of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

— Wanda R. Taylor (2005)

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“CHOSEN VESSEL” by B. V. Cornwall

The Master was searching for a vessel to use:
Before Him were many, which one would He choose?
“Take me,” cried the gold one, “I’m shiny and bright,
I’m of great value and I do things just right.
My beauty and luster will outshine the rest,
And for someone like you, Master, gold would be best.”

The Master passed on with no word at all,
And looked at a silver urn narrow and tall.
“I’ll serve you, dear Master, I’ll pour out your wine,
I’ll be on your table whenever you dine.
My lines are so graceful, my carvings so true,
And silver will always complement you.”

Unheeding, the Master passed on to the brass,
Wide-mouthed and shallow and polished like glass.
“Here! Here!” cried the vessel, “I know I will do,
Place me on your table for all men to view.”

“Look at me,” called the goblet of crystal so clear,
“My transparency shows my contents so dear.
Though fragile am I, I will serve you with pride,
And I’m sure I’ll be happy in your house to abide.”

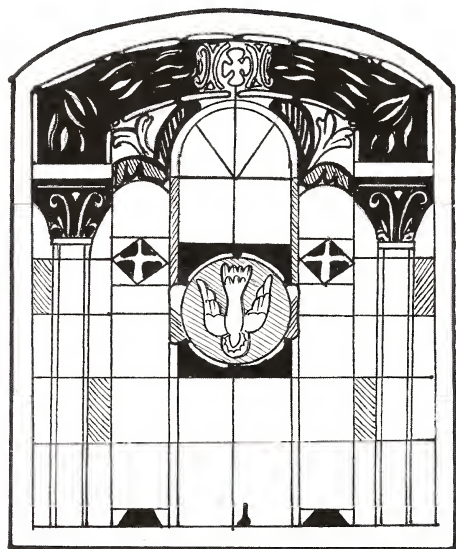
The Master came next to a vessel of wood,
Polished and carved, it solidly stood.
“You may use me, dear Master,” the wooden bowl said,
“But I’d rather you use me for fruit, not for bread.”

Then the Master looked down and saw a vessel of clay,
Empty and broken it helplessly lay.
No hope had the vessel that the Master might choose
To cleanse, and make whole, to fill and to use.

“Ah! This is the vessel I’ve been hoping to find.
I’ll mend it and use it and make it all mine.
I need not the vessel with pride of itself,
Nor one that is narrow to sit on the shelf,
Nor one that displays its contents so proud,
Nor the one that thinks he can do all things just right,
But this plain earthen vessel filled with power and might.”

Then gently He lifted the vessel of clay,
Mended and cleansed it, and filled it that day.
Spoke to it kindly—“There’s work you must do!
Just pour out to others, as I pour into you.”

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. (Matthew 3:16)



Dove with nimbus

Chapter 1

Our Roots

The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. (Romans 8:26-27)

We must look to Roberts Chapel Church to find our roots because she is our mother church. As reported in their 1998 history and in *Northampton Parishes* by Henry Wilkins Lewis (1951), Roberts Chapel Baptist Church was originally located on the county road which leads from Boykins, Virginia, to Woodland in Northampton County, North Carolina, about one-fourth mile south from Woodard's Cross Road (Pendleton) and two and three-fourths miles north from Martin's Crossroad (Conway).

There is evidence that there were four Anglican chapels in Northampton County as recorded on an early map in 1775. It is likely that one of those chapels, St. Paul's Chapel at Dawson's Mill, at which Abraham Stevens served as both clerk and sexton, is indeed what later became Roberts Chapel Church.

Other sources report that Roberts Chapel's first building was a mission chapel, built sometime prior to 1848, and was at that date "an old house." Evidence persists that "the old house" served in the colonial period as a chapel of one of the state-supported Anglican parishes, long since

abandoned. This parish was known as St. Paul's Parish, which most likely eventually became Roberts Chapel Church.

The Methodist church began within the Anglican community. After the Revolution, the Anglican church struggled and reconstituted itself as the Protestant Episcopal Church. In 1784, when the Methodist Church was constituted as a separate denomination, the Methodist Anglicans in St. Paul's Parish probably took the church as their own.

From the post-Revolutionary time up to 1848 when Roberts Chapel became a Baptist denomination, it is thought that the Baptists and Methodists either met jointly or met on alternating weeks. Earlier historians alluded to doctrinal disputes between the Baptists and the Methodists, with three judges ruling in favor of the Baptists. The Methodists, claiming the judges were biased, became angry and began gradually not to attend the services and finally gave up the chapel to the Baptists.

Some say Roberts Chapel Church was named after the carpenter who built the first building and died from a fall off the new structure. Others say that the first building was a mission station given by Lord Granville to his subjects settling in this section of the county and that the name came from a family who lived nearby when all denominations worshiped there. Gradually, as there were more Baptists, the Methodists went to other area Methodist churches. The land was deeded to the Baptists by Silas Edwards. Nicholas Tyner, who owned all the land around, was said to have given the chapel.

Roberts Chapel Baptist Church was constituted on the third Sunday in October, 1848, having thirty charter members.

The church grew to 83 in number by the year 1854. During this time Roberts Chapel was a member of the Chowan Association.

The clouds were gathering for the scourge of the Civil War. War, as horrible as predicted, came. It was noted by W.H. Stephenson in his "Roberts Chapel History" that the next years were among the most difficult in the history of Northampton County and of the nation. Mr. Stephenson wrote of the "war stricken and poverty stricken" years. The Civil War began in 1861 and ended in 1865. 1865 was the year in which President Lincoln was assassinated, the Confederacy dissolved and slavery was outlawed. The records of Robert Chapel reveal that by 1868 most of the former slaves had left the church.

It is recorded that the churches of the Chowan Association recovered quickly from the devastation of the war. Roberts Chapel was no exception and the church "grew in number and influence."

On Tuesday, October 16, 1883, West Chowan Baptist Association

was formed with 34 churches including Roberts Chapel making up the new association. A highlight of the year 1884 occurred when Roberts Chapel hosted in its new building the second annual meeting of the recently formed West Chowan Baptist Association. Roberts Chapel is the fourth oldest church in that association.

The association meetings in the 1800's were BIG events. Our churches, spread so thinly over a large geographical area, considered the association meetings to be the social event of the year. A church hosting the meeting had a big job to do planning for the many messengers to be fed and housed up to three days. Getting to the association meetings was no easy task in those horse-and-buggy days.

As early as the 1884 meeting, the association realized a state Baptist orphan's home was needed. They debated about building their own but decided to raise funds to donate to the N. C. Baptist Orphan's Home. As early as 1887 Roberts Chapel Church collected offerings for foreign, state and home missions, the Baptist Hospital and Mills Home.

Charles W. Scarborough became the fourth pastor in 1886. Membership was greatly enlarged due to a "more thorough work in a better Sunday School building." An historian's report for 1889 notes a dramatic change in church building design—the inclusion of Sunday school (Sabbath) rooms, called infant classrooms, to their church houses. Up to this point, church buildings were mainly auditoriums used for worship services. Roberts Chapel was the first church in the association to build Sunday school classrooms.

The role of women in the church had been developing rapidly since the 1870's. Ladies Aid Societies were functioning. Women sang in the choir and taught in the Sabbath schools. The missionary zeal and leadership of the women of our churches is a history in itself.

Temperance societies had been flourishing for a number of years. Some association historians indicate that alcohol abuse was a problem in as much as seventy percent of the church families. By 1890 sentiment against alcohol was so fervent that the rules were toughened to bar churches from the association if they allowed members in their churches who manufactured, sold or consumed alcoholic beverages.

In 1903 Roberts Chapel members wanted an organ, although "for a long time some of our members thought it sacrilegious to have any musical instrument in church." A new pump organ was purchased for a total cost of \$80.00.

It was during Rev. Scarborough's pastorate that Roberts Chapel's membership was the largest. From that church many members took letters

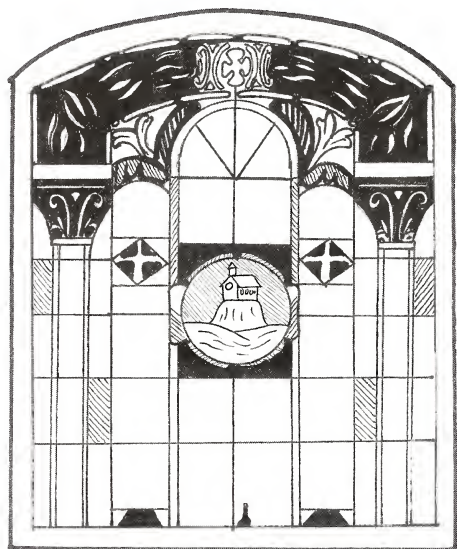
of dismission to help organize Severn Baptist Church in 1896, Conway Baptist Church in 1905, and Ashleys Grove Baptist Church in 1909.

It was said of Rev. Scarborough's ministry at Roberts Chapel, "His was a long and blessed pastorate of 22 years. He loved his people and everyone loved him. He was a plain Gospel preacher who loved the Lord's work. He loved his Lord devotedly. He had a shepherd's heart to a degree that few men possess. He entered into sympathy with his flock, and to him there was no distinction among his flock. He loved them all. He was a welcomed visitor in every home. He was at perfect ease in the most cultured circles, carrying cheer and comfort to the most humble home in his congregation. He was known as a strong, firm, intelligent and devout man of God. Brother Scarborough was a man of strong convictions, and had the courage of them when he believed the measures he advocated were right. Yet he was always mindful of the feelings of others."

Roberts Chapel Church



On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.
(Matthew 16:18)



Church on Rock

Chapter 2

THE BEGINNING

1905 – 1929

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. (Psalm 95:1)

In the year of 1905, the village of Conway had grown enough to necessitate the organization of a Baptist church. These were the days of tallow candles and kerosene lamps, when ox carts and horse and buggies on dirt roads and paths were the only means of transportation. Theodore Roosevelt was President of the United States. The Wright Brothers had flown their first aircraft at Kitty Hawk just two years prior.

Conway was mostly a farming community. Many of its citizens were members and attended services at the Baptist churches of the surrounding communities, namely Roberts Chapel, Potecasi, Galatia and Murfreesboro. In fact, we are often referred to as the daughter of Roberts Chapel Church. These citizens deemed it proper that, since so many people of the Baptist belief resided in and around Conway, their own place of worship was needed.

On August 26, 1905, thirty men and three women met in the public school building, located on the present church lot, to consider the advisa-

bility of organizing a church. It was decided that a committee be appointed to thoroughly canvass the area in and around Conway and to report the feelings of the inhabitants as to the organization of a Baptist church. Those comprising the committee were Rufus T. White, Benjamin J. Ricks, C. Eston Hedspeth, Samuel A. Jones, James R. Martin, D. Barnes, Quinton T. Vann, Jesse B. Vick, J. H. Sumner, H. Askew, J. E. Gilliam, David Hersey Hedspeth, George King Freeman, Clint H. Barnes, W. A. Sykes, and J. L. Deloatche.

At a meeting held on September 2nd, the committee reported a favorable response to the establishing of a Baptist church in Conway and advised that organization should begin in the near future. Rufus T. White, Quinton T. Vann, Benjamin J. Ricks and Benjamin Franklin Martin were appointed to solicit members for the new church. At the next meeting one week later, this committee reported that 108 people were willing to join the new church. It was decided to organize Wednesday after the second Sunday in October at 2:00 o'clock p.m. Abner Lassiter and Rufus T. White were asked to serve on the pulpit committee. J. H. Sumner, George K. Freeman, Jesse B. Vick, Abner Lassiter and Quinton T. Vann were appointed to draw up plans for a building and estimate the cost. It is interesting to note that 16 women were present at this meeting. At the first meeting only 3 were present.

On October 9, 1905, Reverends Charles Wesley Scarborough, Dancy Cale, A. T. Howell and Rufus T. White and Baptists in the vicinity of Conway met in the schoolhouse and organized a Baptist church. Rev. Dancy Cale was elected moderator. He read Psalms 71. Rev. C. W. Scarborough led in prayer, then read the Church Covenant, Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum, which were adopted by the members of the new church.

At the beginning of the meeting, after an appropriate opening, seventy-seven people presented letters and became charter members.

Of these members, seventy-one transferred letters (letters of dismission) from Roberts Chapel, four from Potecasi and one each from Galatia and Murfreesboro.

Abner Lassiter, James R. Martin and John A. Sykes were elected deacons. Having been deacons in their respective churches previously, they did not have to be ordained. James F. Martin was elected clerk and Abner Lassiter, treasurer. The church was declared constituted and went into its first conference. Delegates were elected to attend the association and union meetings. It was decided to purchase a lot adjoining the school

lot on which to build a church building. Abner Lassiter, Rufus T. White and Jesse B. Vick were asked to serve as a building committee. It was decided to call the new church "Conway Baptist Church." The following is a list of the charter members of Conway Baptist Church:

Clint H. Barnes
George King Freeman
C. Eston Hedspeth
David Hersey Hedspeth
E. Milton Hedspeth
Ryland P. Hedspeth
Benjamin T. Jones
John Henry Jones
Magnus Jones
Samuel A. Jones
Montie Carson Kearns
Abner Lassiter
Will J. Lassiter
C. Percy Martin
James F. Martin
J. H. Martin
James R. Martin
Paul C. Martin
Edward Cleveland Nelson
William Nelson
John H. Odom
Jake Winborne Odom
Benjamin J. Ricks
J. H. Sumner
Isaac P. Sykes
John A. Sykes
W. A. Sykes
Paul S. Sykes
E. Jenkins Vann
Quinton T. Vann
Walter T. Vann
Benjamin C. Vick
Elias J. Vick
Jesse B. Vick
Ransom Kelly White
Rufus T. White
Claudie Williams

Mary J. Allen
Mary Allen
Katie Barnes
Fannie A. Boone
Martha A. Britt
Fannie Belle Sykes Futrell
Martha C. Odom Futrell
Maude C. Garriss
Sallie E. Garriss
Sallie M. Garriss
Bettie Sue Hedspeth
Mariah L. Hedspeth
Laura E. Hedspeth
Nita M. Hedspeth
Ruby J. Hedspeth
Zada N. Hedspeth
Josephine Jones
Lelia Jones
Ozella M. Jones
Susan A. Jones
Ella Kearns
Willie Kearns Lassiter
Mary P. Martin
Pattie C. Martin
Sallie Odom Martin
Annie P. Odom
Emma J. Odom
Mattie J. Odom
Maude L. Hedspeth Stotz
Bathsheba C. Sykes
Mattie E. Sykes
Martha I. Sykes
Vergie G. Sykes
Mary E. Vann
Mary J. Vann
Rebecca Vann
Lula Vick
Sarah Elizabeth Vick
Mariah E. White
Olive Williams

At the next conference, the church extended a call to Rev. C. W. Scarborough to become the first pastor. He declined, much to the regret of the members because he had for years been the beloved pastor (for some the only pastor) of a large number of the members. He graciously served the church until a pastor could be secured. The church owes much to Rev. Scarborough for the invaluable service he rendered in the organization of our church. He was a true home missionary and a church planter in every sense of the word.

His master replied, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (Matthew 25:21)

A Child's Impression of The Rev. Charles Scarborough

By Vesta Benthall White (Mrs. R. Kelly White)

July 15, 1972

"We moved from Portsmouth, Va. to Woodland, N. C., while I was a child. The Rev. Mr. Charles Scarborough was pastor of the Woodland Baptist Church. To me he was in so many ways, different from the people around him. He was tall, erect, well groomed and distinctively dressed. He wore a Confederate Gray Prince Albert outfit which matched his heavy thatch of gray hair and a neatly clipped gray beard which reminded me of Robert E. Lee. He carried himself with great dignity. Mrs. Scarborough also carried herself with the dignity of a born lady. She was slender, erect, with delicate Dresden-like features. In public appearances she usually wore a rustling black silk taffeta dress, with a bit of white lace at her throat.

My childhood image of Mr. Scarborough placed him somewhere about midway between God and Moses. His image remains that of a very strong, firm, intelligent and devout man of God. His knowledge of the Bible was unquestionable and his faith in it as the divinely inspired Word of God was unquestioning. Long before our Sunday School Board's influence and techniques had reached, or been accepted in this area, he gathered his Sunday School teachers in his home one night a week, and taught them the lesson for their teaching on the following Sunday. This resulted in considerable spiritual growth among our teachers and the church at large.

For some inexplicable reason, I, though but a child, attended those early teachers' meetings. It was an evidence of their graciousness and sensitivity that they always made me to feel welcome and provided me a stool at Mr. Scarborough's knee. And so it was that I literally sat at his feet as he broke the Bread of Life to us. His reverence for God's Word has greatly influenced my life. In later years when I studied the Bible under the guidance of some of the greatest scholars our denomination has produced... such as Drs. E. Y. Mullens, A. T. Robinson and John R. Sampey I found no conflict with what Mr. Scarborough had taught me.

Now at 73 years of age, with 53 of them spent as the wife of a scholar, pastor, preacher and college president... I am glad to pay tribute to this pastor, a good and great man, who has been a blessed influence in my life. May his tribe increase."

It was told that one day Rev. Scarborough rode on his horse and buggy into Mr. Clint Barnes' yard and asked one of the children to inform their father that he needed to see Mr. Barnes. The child dutifully did so, telling his father that Jesus was in the yard to see him.

Historical Notes—Henry Ford developed the assembly line method of producing automobiles in the 1910 decade. In the national news, the *Lusitania* was torpedoed in May, 1915. Military action was stepped up. On April 6, 1917, after Europe had been at war for more than three years, the United States declared war on Germany. It was almost a year later that Americans soldiers were sent overseas to fight. World War I, with all of its devastation, caused a shortage of food. In 1917 West Chowan Baptist Association voted to support President Woodrow Wilson's call for food conservation. World War I ended in 1919 with the Versailles Treaty. One year later the 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote. Prohibition took effect during this time. The decade ended with Herbert Hoover as President of the United States.

The roaring twenty's were known for their good times, but...one historian writes, "Churches had fallen behind on benevolences for the year 1926. Yet our people find money for automobiles and gasoline to use for pleasure: fairs, circuses, movies, water resorts are largely patronized. Our pastors and churches seem restless and discontented. Pastorates are short. There seems to be a craze for something new. Our body, mind, and soul are longing for something other than what we have."

October 24, 1929, has been named "Black Thursday." The stock market crashed and every bank in the U.S. closed its doors. The Great Depression followed with its devastating effects on people and churches.

Soon after the organization of the church, a call was extended to Rev. M. L. Curtis, who did not accept as he was unable to arrange another appointment with the work he already had.

From the beginning the women had an active part in the growth of our church. It was just a few months after the church was organized that the women met in the home of Mrs. Rufus T. White and organized a Woman's Missionary Society.

Rev. Jesse McCarter (February – November, 1906)

The first pastor was Rev. Jesse McCarter. He began his ministry in February, 1906, just out of Wake Forest College. Although he served only nine months, his energy and efforts were felt and sixteen new members were added to the roll.

During this time, Abner Lassiter gave a large lot adjoining the school grounds on which to build the church. The building was begun, though not completed, during Rev. McCarter's time as pastor. Services were held in the schoolhouse until completion of the building. The school was located where the new church now sits. It was Conway's second schoolhouse, a two story wooden building built around 1888. (Conway's first school was a one room log schoolhouse called Log College.)

Business meetings in the early days of the church were held once a month on Saturday afternoon following a sermon. If the pastor traveled some distance by horse and buggy, he would often spend the night with a member. The roll was called and absentees were noted. Members were expected to be at the meetings or to have a valid reason for their absence. Letters were written to those who were absent from meetings. At a business meeting in March, 1907, it was ordered that the names of female members be called each month at the meeting. Several years later this practice was repealed. At the conclusion of each business meeting, the "church doors were opened" for reception of new members. At the close of a few of the meetings, the doors were opened for reception of members and "none appeared." But at most meetings a number of members were received.

Yearly revival services have been a part of our church year from the very beginning. In the early days they were called protracted meetings.

The church membership grew at a rapid pace. A member was received by transfer of letter, which was called a letter of dismissal by the former church, or by baptism. Our charter members and early members were most likely baptized in Stephenson Sykes Mill Pond as neither Roberts Chapel Church nor our old church had a baptistery in the early days.

As a child, Nina Mae Woodard Ricks was a member of Severn Baptist Church. She remembers going to church on a wagon pulled by a mule. The families would carry their lunch and spend the whole day at church. She was baptized in Stephenson Sykes Mill Pond by Rev. Waff who served as pastor of Conway, Severn and Margarettsville Baptist churches. Nina Mae's mother bought her a beautiful white dress which Nina Mae wore for her baptism. The dress had a full skirt and Nina Mae remembers pushing the skirt down into the water to keep it from floating on top of the water. Nina Mae also remembers that her mother thought "the world" of Rev. Scarborough. One of her brothers was even given the middle name of Scarborough. Nina Mae (born in 1901) remembers Rev. Scarborough as being old! (When Nina Mae was ten years old, Rev. Scarborough was sixty three!)

Another former Severn member reports that on the day he was baptized in Stephenson Sykes Mill Pond, the pond was yellow with stagnant water. Hewore white clothes and when he came up out of the water, he was yellow all over on the outside—but on the inside he was white as snow!

Rev. W. B. Waff (1907 – December, 1914)

In 1907 two years after the church was organized and during the first year of Rev. W. B. Waff's pastorate, the first church building was completed, and it was with much pride that the congregation moved into their new house of worship. Benjamin Franklin Duke built the first church. It was said that he precut the boards for the church with its cathedral ceiling, stating that if they did not fit, the church would owe him nothing.

Rev. W. B. Waff, the second pastor of our church, was a man of fervent piety who was deeply devoted to the spiritual interest of his flock. The church grew rapidly under the leadership of this beloved preacher! Rev. Waff was instrumental in organizing BYPU in the early part of his pastorate. Two active BYPU's (Junior and Senior) met weekly for the purpose of training the young people in the service of our Master. We have no record as to exactly when the Sunday School was organized, but the records of 1907 include Rufus T. White as Superintendent of Sunday School, Paul Martin as Secretary, and Maud Hedspeth Stotz as organist.

It was recorded in the early minutes that an organ was accepted with thanks from Betty S. Hedspeth, Zata N. Hedspeth and friends in August, 1907. The first song books purchased were *Hymns of His Grace*.

Evidently the organ was sold around 1929. The minutes show that a price was set on the organ of \$25.00 in 1923. Each year an organist was elected until August, 1930. At that time and forward until the building of the new church, a pianist was elected with no mention of an organist. The piano had replaced the old pump organ.

In 1910, the debt for the church building was cancelled, and the church planned a dedication service. The service was originally planned for the second Sunday evening in April, 1910. An evening service was planned because the Methodist Church (which was located on Food Center parking lot) was being dedicated that morning. The dedication service actually took place on the second Sunday in May, 1910. It is interesting to note that sister churches for miles around contributed to the payment of the church debt. Rev. C. W. Scarborough preached the dedicatory sermon and Dr. W. L. Poteat of Wake Forest College delivered the address. The members reviewed the first five years and found on the balance sheet a sturdy house of worship, insured for \$2,000.00, equipped with benches, pump organ, song books, chairs, blinds on the windows behind the pulpit and two coal stoves.

The church purchased a piece of land from Rev. W. B. Waff adjoining the church lot to be used as a hitching ground at a cost of \$35.00. The church also purchased the adjoining schoolhouse lot (site of today's church).

There were numerous notations in the early minutes of church members taking collections for those in dire straits, including area widows, orphanages, Chinese famine sufferers and Mississippi flood sufferers. It is interesting to note that a collection was taken for a brother who had lost a mule.

In the year of 1914, a church bell was purchased and installed for the sum of \$128.20.

Braxton Ricks remembers the church bell over the well. Near by was a hitching post where members would tie up their horses when they came to church.

You might be interested in the following resolutions which were adopted in the year 1908 and 1912 respectively:

“Whereas we as a church most emphatically condemn the practice of church members going on the railroad excursion on Sunday and desecration of the Sabbath, contrary to the teachings of God's Word and inconsistent with a profession of religion; therefore resolved: that every member of this church is forbidden to patronize such excursions and will be disciplined for violation of this rule.”

RESOLVED FIRST

That the deacons of this church shall be a standing committee of discipline. They shall inquire into and try to properly adjust all cases of unchristian conduct that may come under their notice and report their action to the church whether settled or not.

SECOND

It shall be the duty of every member of this church who knows of any member walking disorderly or engaging in any unchristian conduct to report the same to the deacons and help them every way possibly to do this work which is hereby put upon them.

Rev. Waff served the church until December, 1914, a total of seven years. During those years, seven revivals were held and 137 members were added to the church. Services were held at different times because the pastor had several churches. During Rev. Waff's ministry here, services were held on third Sunday nights and first Sunday afternoons. Though he was not a strong man physically, he found time to do much work with the young people. During the latter part of his stay, he suffered more than one attack of illness which left him greatly weakened. Rev. Waff was relieved of his “duties” for five months. The reason is not stated in the

minutes but most likely it was due to his health problems. He left us to go into the Piedmont section of North Carolina to try to regain his health. Mrs. E. P. Davis (Nita M. Hedspeth Davis) wrote of him in her 1930 history, "The influence of this consecrated man is felt, even today, in this church and community where he lived, being one of two pastors to reside in our midst. He was a scholar who studied to show himself approved of God, a workman who need not be ashamed, and his powerful sermons of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, delivered in his quiet way, will be long remembered by the people he so faithfully served."

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Rev. Jesse Blalock (April, 1915 – 1918)

Rev. Jesse Blalock was the next pastor of our church. He began his ministry in April, 1915, and served until September, 1918. During those three years four revivals were held and 87 members were added to the church roll. Oil lamps were discarded and electric lights were installed. Rev. Blalock also filled the pulpits of Margarettsville and Severn churches.

In November, 1915, Thanksgiving services were postponed until the first Sunday in December due to diphtheria in Conway.

It is recorded in Severn Baptist Church's history that their church was closed for a brief period due to a severe epidemic of influenza in 1918. That influenza epidemic caused the deaths of 600,000 people in our nation.

During this time temperance societies flourished with fervent sentiments against alcohol. Religious groups all over the country brought so much pressure on lawmakers that the 18th amendment (prohibition) was added to the Constitution. It was later repealed.

Early records indicate that discipline had a very definite place in the church. For failure to uphold certain Christian standards, for failing to pay their assessments, or for neglect of the church, members were sometimes excluded from affiliation with the church. Some were reinstated upon renewed allegiance. Members could be brought up before the church for disorderly conduct such as drinking liquor or cursing. They were also under obligation to pay their dues. Evidently they could ask to be excused for their conduct or delinquency. If they weren't excused, they were expelled from the church and church roll. Members Lloyd Ricks, Curtis Gray, Wiley Sumner and Lokie Hedspeth were excused of their assessments in 1918 and 1919 due to their being in the army.

In July, 1917, two young men, R. Kelly White and Paul Sykes, were ordained as ministers of the gospel. (Both of these men were charter members of the church). After a satisfactory examination, Rev. T. C. Keaton preached the sermon, Rev. J. W. Downey delivered the charge and Rufus T. White presented the Bibles. Dr. R. Kelly White gave his life to the ministry. Mr. Paul Sykes branched off into the field of business.

In 1918, Rev. Blalock resigned to resume his studies at the seminary. Wagons were used to help him and his family make their move.

For a period of two months, the church was without a pastor and again turned to the beloved Rev. Scarborough who served until a pastor was secured.

It was written in Mrs. Nita Davis' history, "Perhaps we can best tell of Brother Blalock's work among us by quoting the resolutions adopted by the church on his departure." The resolution is as follows:

Brother Jesse Blalock having decided that he wanted to go back to the seminary and finish his course there in order to better fit himself for his life's work, resigned his pastorate at Conway. Brother Blalock has served his church well for over three years. He is not a stand still man but believes in moving forward and doing things in the most progressive way. He always took an active part in the Sunday School work and all organizations of the church. This church grew and prospered, not only in members and finance, but in grace and power with the Lord under his watch care. Brother Blalock is a good preacher, a loving pastor and a fine citizen. If any church wants a good, active, conscientious worker it will do well to call him.

A.H. Martin, J. H. Odom, B. J. Ricks, Committee

Rev. J. W. Downey (February, 1919 – October, 1924)

In February, 1919, Rev. J. W. Downey became our pastor and for more than five years he worked, placing emphasis on organization in the church. Seventy-three members enrolled with us during his ministry.

The baptistery in the old church was built in 1919. It was located under the pulpit area. Because there was no running water in the old church, water had to be hauled by hand to fill the baptistery. Soon thereafter the deacons saw to it that a well was dug.

As a man, Brother Downey was just in his dealings, constructive in his methods of work and affable in his treatment of others. He, while indulging in a quick sense of humor, was a man of patience, of steady habits, of robust personal convictions, and of sympathetic and tender emotions. As a preacher he was scriptural, spiritual, strong and practical, a man of open mind, of warm heart and of sound judgment. He was a good citizen, husband, father and friend. He loved God and his brothers.

In 1919 the Southern Baptist Convention called on its churches to raise seventy-five million dollars for its world program. In 1920 the West Chowan Association secured pledges of \$395,706.00 for this. The success of this campaign demonstrated what Baptists could accomplish by pooling their finances and energies. The Cooperative Program grew out of the Seventy-five Million Campaign and "remains the lifeline of all the good that all Southern Baptists do in all the world." An offering of \$200.00 was collected by our church for home, foreign and state missions in 1919.

Church members were concerned and interested in obtaining land to be used as a burying ground. A committee was appointed to confer with the Methodist Church on purchasing some ground for a cemetery for the church members. Two acres of land were purchased from Abner Lassiter in May, 1921, for this purpose.

The years of 1921-1922 were difficult as far as finances were concerned. Pledges were hard to collect. Pledge cards were issued to the members for the first time. Heretofore, the members had been assessed by the board of deacons and called upon by the collector of the church. Many charity cases came up before the members and were met as per custom. Rev. Downey voluntarily reduced his salary from \$750.00 to \$600.00 to assist in this difficult period. He resigned as pastor, to take effect October, 1924.

It was on Sunday morning at 10:45 a.m., December 14, 1924, that Roberts Chapel Church burned. The old church was located on the Pendleton cemetery location. After the church burned, it was rebuilt on the Starkey Woodard property (the current location). Starkey Woodard, grandfather of Nina Mae Woodard Ricks and Aubrey Otis Woodard, is buried on the front lawn of that church.

Rev. A. W. H. Jones (1925 – 1930)

Rev. A. W. H. Jones took up the work in 1925 with the election of deacons A. H. Martin, C. W. Brittle, Lloyd Ricks, R. Jennings White, Sr., John Burgess, S. H. Parks and J. F. Martin. Rev. Jones also served Severn and Margarettsville Baptist churches. He resided in Severn and was said to be a stout man with a voice like a bullhorn. He loved young people and would take a group to the Saturday afternoon cowboy movies in Boykins, Virginia. He then would talk to the children about the lessons to be learned from them. His neighbors said that he slept on the back porch every night of the year – whether summer or winter. The cold weather didn't bother him as long as he had lots of cover.

Linwood ("Lit") Woodard and his family were neighbors of Rev. Jones in Severn at that time and Lit remembers helping him cut and store firewood. When the children were taking the wood to Rev. Jones to be stacked in a building he would say "I'm hungry, I'm hungry," meaning that he needed more wood to stack. Lit and the other boys who were helping would hurry to bring him more. Lit also remembers helping him pick beetle bugs from the plants in the garden. They would put them in a jar, then later pour gasoline on them and burn them. Sometimes Rev. Jones would smash the bugs and say "you despicable villain." Lit also remembers helping Mrs. Jones, who would reward him with a nickel and a sandwich made with her delicious homemade peanut butter.

Laurie Vann remembers Mr. Jack Davis who kept the church clean and kept fire in the two coal stoves. Mr. Davis' barn was right behind the old church. Several of the boys tied his mule's tail to the fence. That mule could not go anywhere. It is unclear if Mr. Laurie was one of those boys!

Braxton Ricks remembers when he was seven or eight years old sitting in his Sunday School class and watching Mr. Jack Davis go out to the barn to milk his cow. Mr. Davis was also the custodian for the church. One of his duties was to supply coal to the two coal stoves that were located on each side of the sanctuary. The older men sat close to the stoves to keep warm. Braxton remembers that he would have to move away from the stoves because that area would get too warm. When the stoves were fired up, they would get red hot!

Many remember that the men sat on the left side of the church (Conway side) and the women sat on the right side. Several people have also spoken of the "Amen Corner." Elderly men who sat in a front corner of the old church would get down on their knees to pray.

Margaret Martin Womble remembers that the children from the Baptist Orphanage would often come to our church to sing and put on plays. On one particular occasion, the children sang "Glow, Little Glow Worm" and as they sang, they lit up little flashlights. She thought that was so cute!

The years 1905-1929 had been busy, productive, prosperous years for our church and the Conway community, but the year 1929 brought a dramatic decline, both in our nation and in our region. In 1929 fifty percent of the cotton crop was lost due to boll weevil infestation. At this time money was in short supply due to the effects of the Great Depression.

A severe drought followed in 1930. An historian reports that there had never been a year in the past two decades when money was so scarce, when it was exceedingly difficult to raise money in the churches. This was a period of Depression when finances were low in both secular and religious work.

Nina Mae Ricks remembers that during the Depression, she would cut up her dresses to be used to make the boys' pants! Son Braxton Ricks remembers that during that time, his parents could not afford to buy a license for their vehicle so the family had to walk to church from their home about a mile away.

The following photo of the children's Sunday School Class was taken in 1933. Those pictured are: Earl Martin, Madie Alice Sumner, Lokie Nelson, Betty Lou White, Elizabeth Britt, Joe Fleetwood, Joe Lassiter, Paul Brittle, Dennis Poe Woodard, Robert Payne Hedspeth, Jeanette Hedspeth, Ivy Mason Vann, Dorothy Francis, E. J. Burgess, Kathleen White, Mary Catherine Nelson, Lawrence Ricks, Gracie Blythe Davis, Winifred Odom and Winnie Hedspeth, teacher.



Historian Mrs. Nita Davis wrote: "God has greatly blessed us and we close this brief sketch recording our humble gratitude to Him who so abundantly blessed us, praying that he may continue to lead us on in our work toward the advancement of His Kingdom."

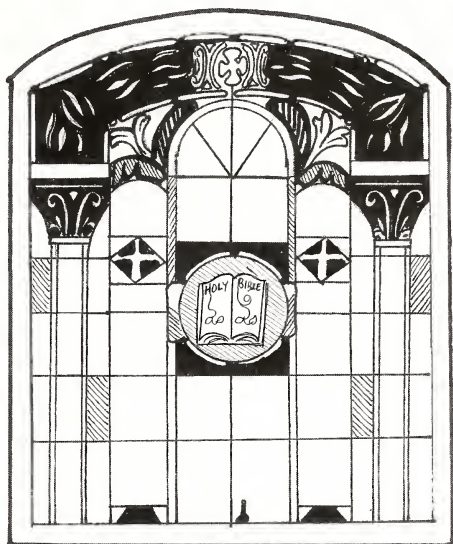
I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. (Psalm 119:11)

Chapter 3

THE GROWING

CHURCH

1930 - 1949



Holy Bible

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. (John 1:1-2)

During the Great Depression one out of every four families in the United States was on relief. The gloom of the Depression caused a falling off in contributions and the church felt the effects of the economic crisis.

In 1933 a new President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, promised a new deal and a new day, but the effects of the Depression were still felt. Money continued to be scarce and contributions were on a steady decline in our association.

By 1938 half of the homes in the United States had indoor plumbing and half of the homes had radios. Orson Welles' drama of H. G. Wells' *War of the Worlds* caused a national panic.

From 1933-1945, the Jews underwent tremendous persecution at the hands of the German government. Most of the Jewish people were put in concentration camps and many lost their lives. On May 16, 1948, the modern state of Israel was born. Many believe that this event fulfilled Bible prophecies concerning an international re-gathering of the Jews in unbelief before the judgment of the Tribulation.

In 1940, under the Selective Service Act, men were drafted into service. The churches had hardly recouped from the Depression when the

country was hurled into the destruction of war. On December 7, 1941, the United States plunged into the midst of World War II triggered by the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. Many of our young men were called into service. It was a time of conservation and loss of manpower, as husbands, fathers, and sons were called into military service.

Georgia's Commissioner of Veteran Affairs, Pete Wheeler, wrote, "The National WWII memorial was dedicated on May 29, 2004, in Washington, D. C. **Freedom is Not Free.** The soldiers, our country and the world paid a tremendous cost. Our veterans are to be commended for their fortitude, resourcefulness and steadfastness to stay the course."

On May 8, 1945, Germany surrendered and on September 2, 1945, Japan surrendered.

Thank You Veteran

A torn and ragged suit
Now hangs on a rack.
How did you feel, veteran,
When you wore it on your back?

When you fought for your country
And for all men to be free,
For a nation with justice for all;
For all to have liberty.

If it had not been for people like you
Who stood for what you believe,
We would not be here to worship
Where all men are free.

So thank you, dear veteran,
For the scars you wear inside.
Many men lived to come home,
And there were many who died.

I pray we don't take it all for granted.
Sometimes you may feel that we do.
This wonderful homeland of America
Would not be standing if not for you.

– Faye Davis

In 1929 due to an enlargement campaign held in our association by the Sunday School Board, our Sunday School made great progress. It was recorded in our 1930 history: "Brother Jones insisted that our Sunday School participate in this campaign. Mrs. A. V. Washburn, who worked with the Sunday School Board, came here and labored unceasingly for

eight days to help put our Sunday School on a higher plane. So well did she succeed in making us realize our need, which was mostly additional room, that in her last meeting with us, Brother Alvah Martin made a motion to build a Sunday School annex to our church. The motion was carried and a building committee was appointed. This committee worked so well and with such eagerness that in August the building was completed. This gave us ten additional Sunday School rooms, which have meant more to the advancement of our Sunday School than we can estimate. To summarize briefly, our church has been organized twenty-five years. During this time we have had five pastors. Over 500 names have been entered on our roll book. We now have a membership of 383. Our church property is valued at \$8,000.00. We have a good Sunday School, a WMU with all four auxiliaries and a live BYPU."

Under the supervision of Paul Martin, Ernest Britt and R. Jennings White, Sr., the building of much needed classrooms was begun. J. E. Taylor was appointed as finance chairman to raise the needed funds. The work began and in a few months the rooms were completed. A renovation program for the original church building was added, which consisted of replastering the walls and painting the whole church. The total cost of annex and repairs amounted to \$4,600.00. By the twenty-fifth anniversary the membership had grown from the 77 charter members to a membership of 383. By this time seventeen revivals had been held. It was evident even at the early date of 1930 that a new church building was needed with a sanctuary "seating capacity of 500 with 13 classrooms and modern equipment."

In December, 1930, Rev. Jones resigned, having served as pastor for five years. In his resignation letter dated December 31, 1930, Rev. A. W. H. Jones wrote:

To the members of Conway Baptist Church Assembled

Dearly Beloved,

Nearly six years ago I was extended a unanimous call to be pastor of this church. These have been years of both joy and sorrow. Sorrow because it has been my sad duty to perform the last sad rites over loved members who have gone into the glory land.

These years have also been joyful years because of fellowship with many of the best members it has ever been the privilege of a pastor to be associated with.

I appreciate every kindness and the loyalty of such servants of the King and thank God for every mention of such devotion.

During these years some visible progress has been made: many members have been added both by letter and Baptism. Sunday School rooms have been constructed and we had hoped would have been paid for.

Mention also should be made of the splendid service of our faithful women in their organized work, the BYPU efforts, and the splendid work of the officers and teach-

ers of the Sunday School.

However for more than six months there has been a growing feeling that the present pastor should sever his relations with the church.

For several months the pastor noticed things that have intensified that feeling. These I need not mention other than to say in passing that the pastor deplores the attitude of many members toward liquor.

All things considered it is certainly best for the pastor, and he thinks for the people, for him to sever the ties that now exist.

I therefore here and now tender my final resignation to take effect December 31, 1930.

May the blessing of God rest upon each and all.

May you be guided by God's Holy Spirit while you journey here below and when life's work is over, find a place at God's right hand in Glory.

Respectfully submitted,

A.W.H. Jones

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. Isaiah 55:8)

Our church shared our pastors with Severn and Margarettsville Baptist churches from the very beginning until the time of Rev. A.W.H. Jones' resignation. Services would be held at different times due to this shared arrangement. After Rev. Jones' resignation in 1930, the church voted to withdraw from the Severn and Margarettsville field and to form a pastorate with Murfreesboro.

Dr. William Richard Burrell (January, 1931 – 1934)

A call was extended to Dr. William Richard Burrell, President of Chowan College and pastor of Murfreesboro Baptist Church. Dr. Burrell began his work in January, 1931.

Dr. Burrell worked diligently while shepherding our church. At this time the rule for dropping members from the roll who had not paid their pledges or assessments was repealed.

It is reported that during all the cruel years of the Depression, pastors suffered along with their congregations. Pastors, struggling to make ends meet, took on every church that would call them and caused the association to ask them to stop accepting more churches than they could physically pastor. A WCBA historian indicated that in 1934, however, the churches began recovering and that there was a thirty percent increase in the giving to missions.

During the three years that Dr. Burrell served the church, quite a few members were added to the roll by letter and baptism. The church continued to grow in membership. Dr. Burrell resigned in 1934.

Murfreesboro, N.C.
8/28/34

The Chairman of Board of Deacons
Conway Baptist Church

Dear Brother:

We are without a pastor and since we are in a field with you, will say that we want to remain with you owing to the fact that we are not able to pay a full time pastor.

We are thinking of calling a supply pastor until we call a regular pastor if you desire to remain with us. We will thank you to inform us early as possible what you wish to do. We feel that we must do something. We will appreciate an early reply.

Yours very truly,
E. W. Whitley, Secretary
Board of Deacons

In a special called conference in November, 1934, the motion carried that the church would stay in the field with Murfreesboro. Evidently there was some discussion on this as it was brought up before the church conference later in the month to reconsider this decision. That motion failed and the church stayed in the field with Murfreesboro. It is assumed that this arrangement continued until Rev. Sasser's pastorate in 1941 as he served the churches of Conway Baptist, Mt. Tabor and Earleys.

Dr. J. C. Owen (1934 – 1935)

Dr. J. C. Owen came to this field in 1934. He and his wife gave untiringly of their strength and spiritual reserve to strengthen the church. The BYPU was revived with Dr. and Mrs. Owen as leaders. Daily Vacation Bible School was organized for a period during the summer. The Sunday School also showed growth during this period. Dr. and Mrs. Owen were remembered for their work among the young people. It was said that Mrs. Owen preached as good a sermon as Dr. Owen. She evidently filled in for him at times. Dr. Owen was 64 years old when he began serving the Lord in his Conway ministry.

It was with delight that we learned that early in his ministry Dr. Owen was a foreign missionary. He was sent to China in 1899 as an assistant to Miss Lottie Moon, pioneer missionary. Our church sent an offering to the Chinese famine sufferers in the early 1900's which would have been during the time that Dr. Owen was in China. It was in God's plan that our early church would support Dr. Owen's early work in China and later we would be blessed to have Dr. Owen serve in our midst. After serving one and a half years at Conway Baptist Church, he resigned to take up work in the western part of North Carolina.

"For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." (Matthew 12:50)

Dr. J. H. Bunn (June, 1935 – April, 1941)

Dr. J. H. Bunn accepted a call to become pastor beginning the first Sunday in June, 1935. He found that the church still owed a sizable debt on the Sunday school annex. Due to the economics of the time, the church had difficulty retiring this debt even with the untiring efforts of the Ladies Aid Society. Through his encouraging leadership, the Sunday School Annex debt of over \$1,000.00 was paid in less than a year. The note was burned the first Sunday in February, 1936. It is interesting to note that it took the church 10 years to pay the debt of \$4,600.00. Those 10 years, however, fell during and following the Depression.

Dr. Bunn resided in Murfreesboro with his wife, son (John) and daughter (Elizabeth). Elizabeth was one of the first coeds admitted to Wake Forest College, an all-male college at the time. Dr. Bunn taught religion at Chowan College.

Dr. Bunn would bring his whole family with him to Conway from Murfreesboro when he preached on Sunday morning and Sunday night. His family would visit and eat dinner and supper with a family of the church.

Elizabeth Barrett remembers Dr. J. H. Bunn's daughter, Elizabeth. She was full of life and all of the girls loved to sit with her at church services; however, she would cause them to get into trouble at times for laughing and cutting up in church.

Iris Martin Darden writes: "My father, George N. Martin, was the choir director and once in a while he would get my sister, Ruth, and me to sing a duet. She sang alto and I sang soprano. He also was instrumental in forming a quartet including the three Ricks boys (Garland, Gilbert and Carl). They would come to our house every Wednesday night to practice. Mrs. Vick from next door would play the piano.

At church Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood played the piano for every service. At that time her son was called "Little Joe." He would sit at the edge of the pulpit near the piano so she could keep an eye on him. My little sister said if he could sit there near his mother, she wanted to sit with him and be near Daddy.

I remember when all the men sat on the left and the women on the right. When I was a teenager a group of us decided we would change all that, so we started sitting on the left with the men.

Another thing Mother had taught us was not to talk or even whisper during the service. Once when Dr. Bunn was minister, his daughter would sit with us and she would talk during the service. We tried to make her hush by putting our finger on our lips, but she paid no attention and just kept on jabbering. One day Dr. Bunn stopped his sermon and stared directly at her but she didn't pay attention, so he finally told her to stop talking. She stopped talking and was so embarrassed!

I also remember when there was no indoor plumbing. There were two wooden "back houses" in the yard. One was labeled "women" and the other "men."

At that time the different members of the church would invite the minister and his family home to eat dinner with them. (I don't think they do that any more.) There

were such a few families who would do that and Mother and Daddy did it a lot. They invited Dr. Bunn and his family to eat with us. The adults would eat first and the children would have to wait and eat last!

In 1938, Dr. Bunn recommended that the church adopt a budget for the year's expenses. The church accepted his suggestion and our first budget was \$2,337.00 for 1940. The church also adopted the unified plan of giving. The same year, the following were elected to serve four years as deacons: C. W. Brittle, R. Jennings White, Sr., Lloyd Ricks, J. A. Sykes, G. N. Martin, R. V. Nelson, J. R. Woodard and E. C. Vick.

Dr. Bunn tendered his resignation in April, 1941, leaving a wonderful record in advancement and an empty place in many hearts.

Jake Odom remembers the flood in August, 1940. Water was so high that Vaughans Creek was impassable and areas of Severn were also flooded. Roads were washed out. He also remembers that the large pine trees on the lot where the new church sits had spikes with rings in them used to tie up the horses.

Joseph Blythe remembers how the ladies dressed in the 40's—in big hats, long dresses and high heel shoes. The men wore striped suits, big ties and hats.

Rev. Lonnie Sasser (May, 1941 – 1961)

The church extended a unanimous call to Rev. Lonnie Sasser in May, 1941. He ministered in our midst for twenty years. During this time Rev. Sasser also served the churches of Mt. Tabor and Earleys. Services at Conway Baptist were held first and third Sunday mornings and second and fourth Sunday nights.

In 1942, the sanctuary was improved by the installation of a new ceiling. The exterior of the church was given a fresh coating of paint.

It was said that Rev. Sasser walked with a limp due to his having lost some of his toes while working in the logging profession before God called him to the ministry.

On June 16, 1946, after the end of World War II, our church held a service honoring the 48 members who served the country. Seats were reserved for the veterans and their families. As the roll was called, each veteran stood and gave a brief sketch of the time he served. A few were not present, some still being in the service and others making their home elsewhere. Rev. Lonnie Sasser made an appropriate address recognizing every veteran from the community and the part each would play in making a progressive, peaceful world. He concluded his remarks by holding a short memorial service. The following men paid the supreme sacrifice of

giving their lives: Stanley Lee Nelson, Joseph Burgess, William Wheeler and John Lee Spence. Stanley Nelson, son of Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Nelson, was killed in action in Holland on Nov. 5, 1944, and was the first of Northampton County's dead to be returned from the European battleground.

It is recorded in 1923 that a communion set was purchased for \$33.76. Later in 1930 J. H. Odom was appointed to dispose of the "old" communion set, which was sold at a price of \$5.00 according to our minutes. It was purchased by the wife of charter member, Paul Martin. Mrs. Martin eventually stored it in a trunk. In 1984, at the time of Mrs. Martin's death, her children, Vera M. Futrell and John Dean Martin, found the set and gave it back to the church. It is currently on display in our fellowship hall lobby. Mrs. Bernice Woodard learned that this communion set was purchased between 1891 and 1893 and is most likely the first one the church owned.



I believe that Conway Baptist Church was formed primarily from members in the immediate area who had been members of Roberts Chapel Baptist Church in Pendleton. We kept a family connection with Roberts Chapel as that was my father's and Uncle Macon's boyhood church. My grandparents, D. M. and Maggie Woodard and my Aunt Nancy, although living in Conway on Hwy 158, remained as members of Roberts Chapel as probably did many other families in Conway and vicinity. Our family alternated Sundays with my uncle in carrying my grandparents (who did not drive) over to Pendleton, and picking them up—which brings to mind another custom of both churches and probably most churches in the days before television—"Talking on the Grounds." This occurred after church when friends and family who had not been in touch or seen one another talked about the happenings and the "news" in the community. As I remember, this was a particularly stressing time for a youngster who wanted to get out of his "Sunday clothes" and go play. It seems as if I spent most of my youth waiting impatiently for the family to load up and leave church. Even now I usually am the first out the back door. I recently told my pastor (who had preached about fellowship and persons leaving the church immediately) that there were those who did this probably because of the "long time" staying after church in their formative years!

I remember the first church—the wooden one that was close to the Davis property line. In fact his lot, that always had a mule or mules in it, ran right against the back

of the church. We kids could climb out the window on one side of the church and walk the fence down to another window (of course this was looked upon by the teachers as a bit defiant.) The church lot sloped towards the side road and had numerous trees. There was also a his and hers outside privy that I don't remember using.

—Memories of John (Johnny) R. Woodard

Jennings White remembers that in the old church, when he was about eight years old, they would open the windows in his Sunday School classroom in the summer due to the heat. When the class was over, the boys would jump out of the windows directly into Mr. Davis' mule pen.



The above photo of the Men's Class, which met in the sanctuary of the old church, was taken in the late 1940's.

Martha Davis Warren remembers attending our church for two years beginning in 1942 at the age of 22. She was a member of the Friendly Sunday School Class taught by Mrs. Nellie Deloatch. She remembers that Mrs. Nellie was a wonderful teacher. After all these years she still remembers a verse from one of Mrs. Nellie's lessons: **Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen** (Hebrews 11:1 KJV). She also remembers that Preacher Sasser was "right next to Jesus."

Pat Parke Maddrey remembers going to BYPU every Sunday night. Being in church was a good way to grow up! Mrs. Clyde Draper taught her Sunday School class when Pat was a young girl. Mrs. Draper had a little brown chair that she used as a "birthday chair." She would decorate it and each child who had a birthday during the week sat in that birthday chair. It was a big event for an eight year old!

Pat also remembers revival services. They were held in August, the hottest week of the year, it seemed. There were afternoon meetings and also evening meetings. The ladies would dress up to go to all of the meetings wearing dresses, hats and gloves. Pat

also remembers Mrs. Annie Lois Hedspeth and Pat's mother, Mrs. Ruby Parke, as having the greatest influences on her life.

Earlier, during the temperance movement, West Chowan Association had tightened its rules about alcohol. In 1944 the association reaffirmed its stand that had been taken in 1885 against alcohol. One of its churches withdrew due to the stand on alcohol but later rejoined.

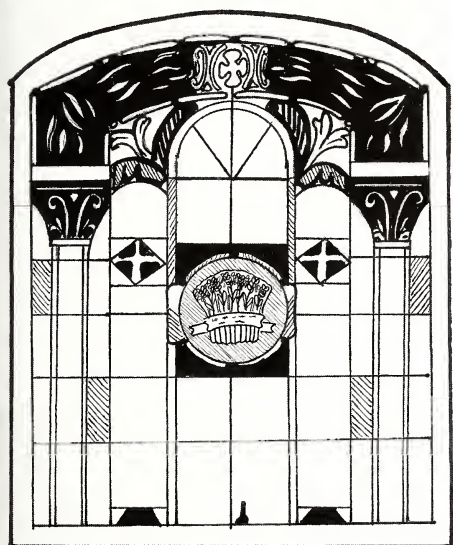
In 1946, during a business meeting, the motion was made and carried, that reaffirmed our church's stand of the covenant that prohibited the sale and manufacture of strong drink as beverage. This was an uneasy meeting in which one family left our church. Two of the family members transferred their letters back here a few years later.

The Depression had taken its toll on Chowan College, which was financially supported by the West Chowan Association. Earlier, in 1936, our association asked the state convention to take over this support. Chowan College was forced to close its doors at the end of the spring semester in 1943 due to lack of students and funds. The association's focus during the years of 1946 and 1947 was devoted to raising funds to reopen Chowan College, which took place September 14, 1949. Rev. Sasser, well known throughout the area, spearheaded the drive to raise funds and was instrumental in its re-opening.

A fellowship and song service was held in our church on April 21, 1949, for the churches of which Mr. Sasser was pastor: Conway, Mt. Carmel, Mt. Tabor and Earleys Baptist Churches. Rev. Sasser's former churches were also extended an invitation. They were Roberts Chapel, Potecasi, Lasker, Menola, Galatia, Connaritsa and Aulander Baptist churches. Conway Methodist Church members were also invited.

Mrs. Kitty White was very insightful when she wrote the following in her 1953 history: "Conway Baptist Church today stands on the threshold of new horizons, thankful for the many blessings down through the years from the Omnipotent God, and pledging all efforts to further His Kingdom."

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." (John 6:35)



Wheat

Chapter 4

COMPLETING

A HALF

CENTURY

1950 — 1960

GOD'S LOVE BINDS US TOGETHER – HEART TO HEART

On the national scene, the Korean War was fought in the early 50's. Dwight D. Eisenhower was President of the United States. During this decade regular color TV broadcasts began and in 1956, millions of viewers watched as Ed Sullivan introduced Elvis Presley. The first civil rights bill since the Civil War days was passed by the Congress in 1957. The U.S. launched its first satellite into space in 1958, and Fidel Castro took over leadership of Cuba in 1959. Alaska and Hawaii were admitted into the United States in 1959, making up the 50 states in the Union.

The economics of the time were improving. By the early 40's the church membership had grown substantially. The yearly budget was \$4,500.00. All expenses were met easily, and it was evident that more room was needed for the fast growing Sunday School as the church was bursting at the seams! Since the organization of the Sunday School in 1907 and with scores of capable people as teachers and officers, the church at this time in its history reported a graded Sunday School membership of 400 and over 600 church members. Under Rev. Sasser's leadership, at a con-

ference called specifically to discuss plans for enlarging the Sunday School, J. E. Taylor made a motion that a building fund be started with every member contributing. Plans for the new building and the building fund were started during the war in January, 1943. By April, 1946, \$19,430.78 had been raised. It was eventually decided that a new sanctuary was needed, and the church made the decision to build a brick, colonial style church.

One particular fund-raising event recorded in several photos was the Silver Tea held in the old Conway School Teacherage. Below is a photo of the ladies who helped with the Tea. Left to right are: Allie Ricks, Christine Davis, Janie White, Pattie Barnes, Lou Evans, Mattie Ricks, Nina Mae Ricks, Lila Bryant, Gracie Barnes, Sally Mae Flythe, Euzelia Tillery and Marguerite Davis.



When the building of the new church was being discussed, people stood up at business meetings and made pledges. One gentleman would not give the money up front because he could make interest on that money. He would give the money in three installments at three different stages of completion. He gave the first installment when the foundation was dug, then gave the remainder at the different stages of completion.

When the new church was being built, money had to be borrowed from the bank. Members signed personal notes guaranteeing the payment of the church notes. Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood signed one of the notes. It was told that Dr. Fleetwood asked her one day, "Caroline, what will you do if the note cannot be paid by the church?" Caroline answered, "I will sell my violin and use the money to pay the note!"

On the first Sunday in May, 1948, it was decided to begin plans for a new church building. Aubrey Otis Woodard, Clifton A. Davis, Marshall Francis, R. Jennings White, Sr., J. H. Vick and Andrew J. Hedspeth were elected as a building committee. In July, plans were presented and accepted. It was decided that the location of the new church should be in the center of the lot occupied by the old school building. The committeemen responsible for finances were John M. Vick (Chairman), Grady Davis, J. Raynor Woodard, W. H. Barnes, and L. W. Hedspeth. Mrs. Gertrude Lanier was treasurer during this period. Ladies who were asked to give suggestions as to the inside decorations and furnishings of the new church were Mesdames R. Jennings (Kitty) White, C. S. (Nellie) Deloatch, Julian (Helen) Bridgers, Burton (Gracie) Barnes and C. B. (Clyde) Draper. The new church was started May 18, 1949. It is reported by the family of Aubrey Otis Woodard, Sr. that he and many others put their hearts and souls into the building of the new church.

Among the many decisions that had to be made was whether or not the church should be constructed with a steeple. It is recorded that there was a lengthy discussion on this matter (fifty-five minutes to be exact). The vote was 56 to 21 in favor of the inclusion of a steeple.

It was at this time that a wonderful blessing occurred: a new church building almost ready for service, a new life dedicated to the service of God. Benny Pledger was ordained to preach the gospel on July 13, 1950. Benny was the third young man sent out from this church, and his career was watched with much interest. He gave his life to the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ.

During this time Billy Vinson Davis and Sam Jones, as young boys, were walking down Hundley Circle which was then a dirt road. They passed a two story house that stood where Conway Woman's Club building now stands. There must have been a few harsh words shared between Billy, Sam and the boys who lived in the house. Billy and Sam had to run away as fast as they could and they were chased by the other boys. They ran in the direction of the church which was under construction, entered the church building and hid in the steeple until it was safe for them to come out!

On the second Sunday in August, 1950, the members met for the first time in their new brick church of early colonial style, which was carpeted, furnished and adorned with beautiful stained glass windows. It was recorded that as Mrs. J. A. Fleetwood played the organ, everyone present felt thankful to God for His blessings and generosity. The members knew no bounds of gratitude to the pastor and committees who had worked so faithfully through this critical period.

The building project was begun with \$33,789.73 in the treasury. When the building was completed in August, 1950, \$93,053.56 had been paid, with the total cost being \$138,170.00. Meherrin Valley Bank of Boykins, Virginia, on the endorsement of many of the members, had made the church a loan of \$30,000.00. The Bank of Conway also held a note.

In July, 1950, the old church building was sold to the highest bidder and eventually torn down and moved. In December, 1952, the notes at the banks were canceled and Conway Baptist members had paid for their beautiful house of worship. Mrs. J. D. Lanier, treasurer of the church, was indeed a faithful servant during the years of building and was recognized for her untiring efforts and perfect records during this period.

The dedication service for the debt-free building was held February 15, 1953. Rev. Lonnie Sasser led the Dedication Service and Note-Burning Ceremony. A short history was given by R. Jennings White, Sr. (compiled by Mrs. R. Jennings White, Sr.). Dr. F. O. Mixon delivered a stirring message. Special music was rendered by the Senior and Junior Choirs under the direction of Mrs. Julian Liverman, accompanied by Mrs. J. A. Fleetwood on the organ. It is reported in the *Biblical Recorder* front page article of March 7, 1953, that, although the building was constructed for \$138,000, its real value was estimated to be between \$200,000 and \$250,000. The church had experienced tremendous growth from the 77 charter members to more than 600 present on the dedication day.

Mrs. R. Jennings White, Sr. (Kitty) was a school teacher and at the time of her retirement was a postal clerk at the Conway Post Office. She was a civic leader and very active in her church. For 56 years she taught a ladies' Sunday School class. Mrs. White was an articulate leader and wrote two of our church histories (50th and 75th). Woman's Missionary Union was very important to her and she held many leadership positions in our church, and served two terms as Associational WMU Director. She also taught many WMU study courses through her years of serving Conway Baptist Church.

WCBA historian Mrs. Bernice Kelly Harris wrote, "Through a history, the church can better understand itself, get a clearer view of its own identity. It is a ministry that will tend to deepen one's love for his church. The yesterdays of churches should enrich its todays and tomorrows, so that new generations will profit by experiences of former years."

Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Betty Lou White (Taylor) was the last bride to be married in the old church and Blannie Davis (Jenkins) was the first bride to be married in the

new church; Jeanette Burgess (West) was the second bride and Kathleen Francis (Johnson) was the third bride.

Rev. Lonnie Sasser was honored on July 9, 1953, in the morning service upon completion of his twelfth year as pastor. Special music was provided by the Adult Choir, Miss Nancy Rainey (educational director) and a men's quartet from Mt. Tabor Baptist Church.

Our church also participated in the Fifth Sunday Sings during Rev. Sasser's ministry. This was a wonderful experience of fellowship and good music shared by those who attended. Our beloved Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood was often the pianist at these Fifth Sunday Sings.

Among the many who served on committees and performed their duties was Mrs. C. S. Deloatch, chairman of the Landscaping Committee. She saw to it that our new church was beautifully landscaped. She provided cuttings from her own camellia bushes for the shrubs on the sides of the church and cared for the flower beds for many years. Mr. George R. Evans was chairman of the trustees at this time.

Many will remember Mrs. Thelma Blythe. Her son Joseph Blythe wrote these words:

In remembrance of my mother, affectionately called "Miss Thelma," I owe my life to her love and caring. She was my mentor, mother and friend. She never stopped loving God and her family. She was a Sunday School teacher for many years. I often would sit and watch her prepare her lesson for the week, and sometimes I would read her notes and get inspired by what she was going to tell the people on Sunday. Mama never stopped trying to go to church but in the mid 70's she began to fail. She was in the rest home in Ahoskie where she continued to teach and play the piano for those in the home. Mother survived a brain tumor, cancer, but the stroke was a little too much for her. She lived a wonderful life, giving of herself to her family, church members and friends. On January 19, 1987, she left us and went to her reward in Heaven and to God.

Many will also recall Mr. Dave Burgess, who often brought flowers to pin on the ladies and gentlemen. He could be depended on to have red and white roses for Mother's Day and Father's Day.

Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck.
(Proverbs 1:8-9)

Mr. James Franklin Martin (known as Mr. Jimmy) resigned as church clerk in 1955. Mr. Martin had served from 1905 to 1955, a total of fifty years of dedicated service. This is a record in any history. His handwritten minutes and membership roll, dating back to 1905, are stored at Z.

Smith Reynolds Library at Wake Forest University in Winston Salem, N. C. Mr. Martin was awarded the honor of Deacon Emeritus in 1962 for his many years of service as a deacon of Conway Baptist Church. This letter was sent to his family at the time of his death in 1964:

May 6, 1964

Mrs. George Smith
Mr. Joseph Riddick Martin
Mr. James W. Martin

Dear Friends:

When your father, Brother James F. Martin, died on February 26, 1964, his passing, in a sense, marked the close of an era in the history of the Conway Baptist Church. He was one of 77 charter members when the church was organized October 9, 1905. At the organizational meeting, held in the school building, he was elected clerk of the church, and in this capacity, he served for nearly 50 years, turning over these duties to someone else only when his health made it necessary. Nearly all the records which the church now has are the result of his faithful work.

The minutes show that Mr. Jimmy was elected a deacon in December, 1908, and that he was ordained on the second Sunday in March, 1909. This means that he served his church as a Deacon for 55 years, many of which were in the capacity as Chairman of the Board. Again, because of failing health, when he could no longer take an active part, the present Board of Deacons conferred on him the honor of Deacon Emeritus. This was done on March 5, 1963. The following Sunday, March 10th, the Deacons and the Pastor met in the Martin home and read the letter of Deacon Emeritus. Afterwards, a Communion Service was held.

The Board of Deacons have felt anxious to pay tribute to Brother Martin since his passing, and to express appreciation on behalf of the Conway Baptist Church for his Christian life and his devotion to his church. It was decided that this letter be spread upon the minutes and that a copy be sent to each of his children.

The present Board of Deacons is as follows: E. L. Barnes, Haywood Davis, Norris Deloatch, S. D. Hedspeth, Jr., William D. Johnson, Grady Martin, S. H. Parke, Lawrence W. Ricks, Lloyd R. Ricks, Laurie J. Vann, C. J. Watson and A. O. Woodard, Jr.

Yours in Christian Love,
C. J. Watson, Chairman
For the Board of Deacons
Donald J. Dunlap, Pastor

During these years, the church was, as always, busy doing the Lord's work. This included teaching and inspiring our young people, some remaining in our church for service, others moving away and attending other churches, all sharing the light of Jesus' love.

During this time, the GA groups were very active under the leadership of Mrs. Annie Lois Hedspeth and others. Several GA coronations and banquets were held.

Pat Hedspeth Smith relates that her mother, Annie Lois Hedspeth, most inspired her. Her Christian example inspired her daughter to achieve all that she has in her Christian walk. Mrs. Annie Lois was a GA leader for so long. Pat Parke (Maddrey) also worked with the GA's and inspired Pat Hedspeth (Smith) to achieve. Our lives are so immersed into this Body of Christ. We will never know until we get to heaven the many people who have been touched and used of God by our witness.

Pat Hedspeth Smith also remembers that she looked forward to being a GA so much. When she became nine years of age and could become a GA, she already had all of her steps memorized and she immediately became a "maiden." She was so happy to become a queen and could wear an evening dress (as only a queen could wear) rather than just a white dress for the ceremony. She was the first Queen Regent in North Carolina!

Jackie Duncan Hardy wrote: I belonged to GA's and YWA's. Mrs. Annie Lois Hedspeth was our GA leader. We learned lots of scripture and studied a lot about missions. I accomplished the steps up to "Queen" and all of the girls participated in an annual coronation service and wore long white dresses. It was quite an occasion to recognize the accomplishments of the girls in those days.

I have been a member of Conway Baptist Church since I was twelve years old. Mrs. Winnie Hedspeth was the Junior girls teacher and it was during one of her Sunday morning classes that I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior.

The class parties were always held at Mrs. Winnie's house and I remember being there in her living room playing various games during a Christmas party. She had no children of her own and she treated us as if we were her children.

My grandparents, John and Nettie Vick, were faithful members of Conway Baptist Church. They raised their children to go to church here, and their children, in turn, raised their children to be faithful in attending church. My grandmother had her special spot to sit on Sunday mornings, in the center aisle and in the third or fourth pew from the front. She was "short" in stature but large on faith, and always at her pew was a little foot stool made of coffee cans covered with cotton batten and calico material.

During Rev. Sasser's pastorate, the Sunday School enrollment numbered more than 400, the Woman's Missionary Society numbered 165 and the BTU numbered more than 50.

It was under Rev. Sasser's leadership that the building of a parsonage was begun, leading the church toward becoming a fulltime church. When he came to Conway as pastor, Rev. Sasser and his family lived in the Haley Bridgers' house on Lake Deberry Road. He later moved to Murfreesboro.

Rev. Sasser will long be remembered as a kind, loving man who was always caring and interested in each member. He visited the members, including the sick, and often enjoyed sharing a meal with them. During revivals the visiting preacher and Rev. Sasser would eat in a member's home and then would visit other members during the day.

Most church members would sit in the same seat almost every

Sunday. Therefore Rev. Sasser was able to observe when one was absent because of the vacant seat and he would often tell that member that they were missed "last Sunday."

Mr. Sasser enjoyed fishing and many times he would be invited to go fishing with a friend. On one such occasion it was told, that while he was fishing with a church member, Mr. Sasser caught a big fish. As the fellow fisherman was trying to help him get the fish in the boat, the fish slipped off and quickly swam away. The friend exclaimed, "Darn," to which Mr. Sasser said, "Thank you, brother!"

In 1959 the church was insured for \$15,000.00. Our budget in 1961 was \$8,330.00.

Rev. Sasser resigned in 1961, having served the church for twenty years. Our church honored him and his wife (Minnie Rose Sasser) with a reception and a gift of money. Over 250 guests attended. Guests included their daughter (Mary), and her son (Lonnie Sasser Smith). Music was provided by Mrs. J. A. Fleetwood, violinist, Kay Francis, pianist, and Rose Lynn James, soloist.

Under his leadership the church experienced tremendous growth and accomplished great improvements and additions, including the purchase of a lot and the building of a parsonage.

He continued to preach and do the Lord's work. He was very diplomatic, loyal to his churches and active in the West Chowan Association. He was devoted to his wife, daughter and grandson.

When we look back over the events of our lives, we can sometimes see clearly that God placed us in circumstances for His purposes.

Linwood (Lit) Woodard remembers a time when his son, Linwood, was about twelve or thirteen years old. Linwood's Sunday School class was to have a picnic at Fisher's pond. Some of the boys had just begun to learn to swim. Some could only dog-paddle. Lit felt a strong need to take off work and go with the boys and their Sunday School teachers to help out with the outing. As it turns out, two of the boys got into trouble in the water and called out for help. They had gone out too far and were going under the water. Lit jumped in the pond, fully dressed, including his shoes and bill folder. He pulled those two boys out of the pond and saved their lives!

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." (John 20:21-23)

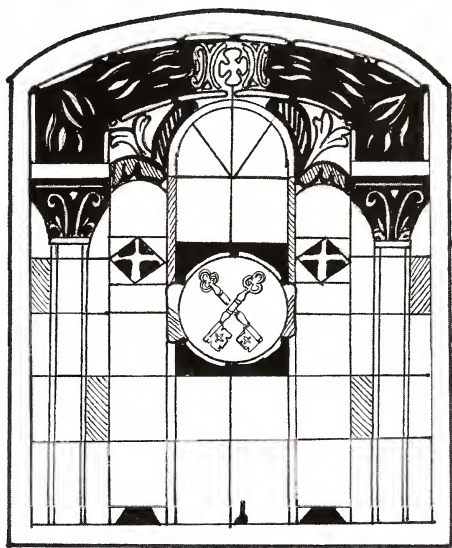
Chapter 5

A STEP IN FAITH

FULL TIME

CHURCH

1961 - 1969



Keys

Nationally the world seemed to go into a downward spiral. In 1961, the German city of Berlin was divided by a barbed wire fence (Berlin wall) and America unsuccessfully invaded Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. On November 22, 1963, President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. Most of us who remember this event know exactly where we were when we heard this terrible news. The country was going through troubling times with the Civil Rights Movement. Later in the decade came the Vietnam War and the civil unrest and riots protesting the war. A six day riot in Los Angeles caused the deaths of 34 people and the arrests of 3,000 participants. There was civil disorder in Chicago during the Democratic National Convention in 1968. In that same year Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated.

As troubled as our world seemed, the members of Conway Baptist turned to the faith of their fathers for hope and strength and kept their eyes on their Savior. They decided to step out in faith. The church was ready and anxious to become a full station church with a full-time pastor.

Dr. Donald Jordan Dunlap (July 9, 1961 – February 13, 1966)

Rev. Donald Jordan Dunlap became the first full-time pastor of Conway Baptist Church. He was 28 years of age and a bachelor at the time. He preached his first sermon here on August 6, 1961, entitled "That We May Know Christ." He was our first full-time pastor and we were his first pastorate.

As the first occupant, Rev. Dunlap found that the new parsonage contained a study but no furniture. Without the necessary finances to purchase a desk and cabinet, with the help of his father, he built the furniture, using some of the cherry wood from his father's storage. One high school graduate remembers Rev. Dunlap's having the graduates over for dinner, which he prepared himself and served in the parsonage dining room.

When Conway Baptist Church voted in 1960 to become a full station church for the first time since it was constituted in 1905, a Building Committee was formed to construct a parsonage on a lot just behind the sanctuary and educational building. This committee and many of the members had visions of a young minister moving in with a wife and two small children. But the Selection Committee recommended a young bachelor who moved into the new parsonage in August of 1961.

During the committee's interviews with Rev. Dunlap, Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood, church organist, who was also a member of the committee, assured the prospective pastor, when his marital status was mentioned, "We can take care of that, too!" On that August night when Rev. Dunlap arrived in Conway, deacons and other members were waiting to help unload the truck with his few belongings. Among this group was Mr. Sam Parke, one of the saintly older members of the congregation.

As the unloading was being done in record time, Mr. Parke, with a mischievous smile on his face, said to the new bachelor minister, quoting scripture, "One thing thou lackest." After the loading was completed, the Chancel Choir came over to welcome the new minister who was accompanied by his father and older brother. Among them was a recent high school graduate who would be leaving shortly to begin her studies at East Carolina College in Greenville.

Kay Francis had grown up in the congregation and been an active member since her early years. Rev. Dunlap thought to himself: "If I were to ask her for a date, people might accuse me of robbing the cradle." But the next summer Kay worked in Vacation Bible School, and Rev. Dunlap was surprised to see how much she had matured in a year. Before the end of June, he asked Kay if she would like to have dinner with him. She answered: "Why, yes, Mr. Dunlap, that would be very nice."

From that first date romance flourished, and their courtship lasted two years. They became engaged in September of 1963, and their wedding took place on Sunday, June 28, 1964, just two weeks after Kay graduated from ECC. After a wedding trip to New England, so that Kay could visit Andover Newton Theological School, and several days were spent in North Conway, New Hampshire, the couple returned to Conway. At last the new parsonage was no longer "bachelor minister's quarters."

Two or three years after their marriage, Kay and Don were browsing through a book store and came upon a book entitled: "Why a Minister Should Never Date a

Member of His Congregation.” But whatever wisdom the book may have contained, it was too late to save the happy couple. The Conway congregation could not have been more excited and supportive throughout their courtship. And the members made their wedding day unusually happy and were most generous with gifts.

The affection and support of the congregation was doubly appreciated because just five months after they were married, Kay’s mother, Mrs. Nettie Brittle Francis, died of a malignant brain tumor after a valiant battle with that insidious disease. In March of 1966 Kay and Don moved to Suffolk, Virginia, where he became minister of West End Baptist Church. And they took with them many cherished memories which are still nestled in their hearts.

Memories by Kay and Don Dunlap

The church members were delighted when their pastor married Kay Francis, an English teacher and one of our own members, on June 28, 1964. The congregation honored the couple with a reception prior to their wedding.

July 5, 1964

Dear Friends in the Conway Baptist Church:

When you read this – the first letter from your new pastor and his new wife, Kay and I will be on our wedding trip through the New England states. On this first Sunday in July we hope to be worshipping in the First Baptist Church of Watertown, Massachusetts, where Don served as an assistant to the minister for three years while attending seminary. But we shall also be worshipping with you in spirit as we remember how much you did for us and how much happiness you gave to us through all the events connected with our wedding. The reception of June 21st was exceptionally lovely, and we felt quite honored that you would do this for us. And we were really quite overcome with the gift of the beautiful silver tray, and the engraving both back and front makes it even more special. Through the years we shall treasure this gift more and more because it comes from the congregation in which Kay grew up, and the first church to which Don was called as minister.

We want you to know that our gratitude and happiness is boundless. We feel especially blessed in so many ways, but particularly in you, our friends in Conway. You can be sure that your parsonage will never be the same again. And if you were welcome there before, you will be even more welcome there now since it is no longer bachelor’s quarters.

In Christian Love, Kay and Don

Raynor Woodard was the chairman of the Pulpit Committee. Rev. Dunlap asked him for a copy of the budget for 1960. The next Sunday Mr. Woodard pulled out a piece of paper on which the amount of \$9,300.00 was written and gave it to Rev. Dunlap. That was the budget! Mrs. Gertrude Lanier, our treasurer for many years, reported to Rev. Dunlap that income had exceeded \$20,000.00. Five years later the budget was \$24,540.00.

Dr. Dunlap recalled that the Sunday School was the glue that held the church together. Prior to 1961, before the church voted to become full-time, services were held on first and third Sunday mornings. On second and fourth Sunday evenings services would be held. There was a time of adjustment when members had to get used to attending worship services *every* Sunday morning. On one second or forth Sunday morning, Dr. Dunlap had to go to the parsonage for something between Sunday School and preaching. He said that it looked like a mass exodus with people leaving after Sunday School. He decided never to go back to the parsonage at that time again!

In October, 1961, Floyd S. Blowe was granted license by our church to the gospel ministry. He was baptized in Aulander Baptist Church and moved his membership to Conway Baptist Church when he was in the ninth grade.

Changes needed to be made and plans needed to be projected since the church had become full-time. Under Rev. Dunlap's leadership a Long Range Planning Committee was formed on March 25, 1962, to study this matter and submit recommendations at the conclusion of its investigation. The committee recommended in January, 1963, that four boards be created to manage the major areas of church life: worship, finance, Christian education and missions. Upon the recommendation of the Planning Committee, the church voted to divide the responsibilities among four boards: Deacons, Trustees, Christian Education and Missions. Also three new committees were formed: Baptismal Committee, Flower Committee and Communion Committee. These boards and committees involved getting more members active in the operation of the church. Previously the pastor and deacons took care of most of these responsibilities.

Rev. Dunlap worked diligently to get the church records in order, to equip the church office and to make the church more organized.

Two phases of improvements were made under his leadership. The first phase of improvements included remodeling and renovating the church sanctuary, repairing upper and lower foyers and bathrooms, and installing of carpet in 1965. The second phase of improvements to the building included tiling of all uncovered floors in the basement, the repairing of ceilings, building storage units and cabinets and painting the educational portion of the church. The surface of the parking lot was also black-topped.

Rev. Dunlap instigated several new traditions, which included circulating a newsletter, using Advent candles and decorating the sanctuary more beautifully, especially during Christmas and Easter. He also began the practice of placing carnations on the pulpit honoring new babies. The first baby honored by a pink carnation on the Sunday following her birth

was Christine Annette Davis, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clifton A. Davis, Jr.

It is always a blessing in a church when a nursery is needed. The old Fellowship classroom was converted into a nursery. Mrs. Virginia Futrell was employed as our first nursery supervisor. She worked in the nursery each Sunday with two volunteers. She later served as the church's first part-time secretary.

Rev. Dunlap chose the figures that were placed on the front of the piano and organ enclosures. The following, written by Rev. Dunlap, later appeared in an annual report.

On the panels in front of the piano and organ in our sanctuary are symbols which are designed to portray Christian truth. In order that you may understand their meaning, and thus appreciate their presence, a brief explanation of each one follows.

The Circle The Circle is a symbol for eternity. God is eternal. Christian faith proclaims that those who live 'in Christ' will live eternally.

IHS The IHS is sometimes seen as IHC, since S and C are only different forms of the same letter in the Greek alphabet. The letters are simply an abbreviation for 'Jesus.' Iota, eta, sigma are the first three letters in the Greek word for 'Jesus.' When this is written in Greek capital letters, the first three letters are IHS if English capitals are substituted for Greek. So, IHS is a symbol which means 'Jesus.'

The Dove The dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit because at His baptism Jesus "saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove to alight upon Him." (Matthew 3:16)

The Bell The symbol of the bell represents the bell in the church steeple reminding the people of the priority of the things of God over the interests of man and calling the people together to worship God.

The Cross Of course the cross is the best known Christian symbol. It reminds us that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, gave His life on a cruel, shameful cross. The death of Christ on the cross is a reminder that God's love for man knows no end. God's love has no stopping place. It would not even stop at the cross. Through the cross God has reconciled sinful humanity to Himself.

The Open Bible The symbol of the Bible is another well known sign to Christians. It serves as a reminder that God has revealed Himself to man and this revelation is found in the Bible. The Bible points us to God.

The Fish

The fish has been a symbol used by Christians since toward the end of the second century. During persecution of Christians, a fish symbol was often placed on the door of Christians so that others of the fellowship would know that a Christian brother lived there. The reason a fish was chosen is the following: The Greek word for 'fish' is ICHTHUS, and this word can be made into an acrostic:

I	Jesus	(Jesus; I in Greek is the same as J in English)
CH	Christos	(Christ)
TH	Theou	(God's)
U	Uios	(Son)
S	Soter	(Savior)

The fish symbol, therefore, once the secret is known, conveys a wealth of meaning: Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior.

The Torch

The torch is a symbol that reminds Christians of their responsibility to let their light shine for Christ. Jesus said: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

The Cross

And Candles

Also a part of the symbolism of our church is the cross, flanked on either side by a candle. The cross is symbolic of the finished redemption of Christ, risen from the dead and reigning from the throne in heaven. A candle on each side of the cross symbolizes the two natures of Christ, Divine and human.

Flowers

Flowers in the church serve as symbols that remind us of the beauty of God's created works. They are living flowers to remind us that Christ conquered death and that he lives.

Dr. Dunlap recalled this incident and related it to a church member on May 1, 2005, when he joined us for our Former Pastors Emphasis. When the church was being remodeled, Rev. Dunlap chose the symbols to be mounted across the front of the church. He instructed the carpenter on the sizes and shapes. The carpenter actually shaped the symbols but when Rev. Dunlap saw them, he thought they were a "little rough." Being a woodworker himself, he fine-tuned the symbols, adding finishing touches where needed. When the carpenter attached the wooden trim around the finished symbols, the trim was mounted a little crooked. Rev. Dunlap pointed this out and asked the carpenter to put his level to the trim and straighten it up. Sure enough, the trim was about 1/2 of an inch off. The carpenter said, "Well preacher, you are right. I'm surprised a preacher could see that." A painter on a scaffold, up near the ceiling of the sanctuary who was spray painting the ceiling, observed all that had transpired and said, "Well, don't you know that's what preachers do — make the crooked straight!"

New educational equipment was added to the church. Under the recommendations of the Board of Missions, the church began to contribute more generously to missions and to increase their contributions to West Chowan Association.

At this time there were three choirs under the direction of Mrs. Julian Liverman. They were the Cherub Choir, the Carol Choir and the Church Choir. The singers numbered 72! Our Church Choir members were Juanita Britt, Gail Martin, Susan Burgess, Martha Harris, Gail Vinson, Kay Francis, Lillie Vick, Patricia Lane, Nina Mae Ricks, Elizabeth Vinson, Alma Brittle, Isla Rae Davis, Cary Davis, Luther Vinson, Lloyd Ricks, L.G. Britt, Bernard Deloatch and Julian Liverman.

On September 30, 1965, we celebrated our 60th anniversary with a service and an old-fashioned dinner on the grounds. Dr. W. Perry Crouch, Secretary/Treasurer of N. C. Baptist State Convention was the keynote speaker. John R. Woodard, director of Baptist Collections, spoke on preserving the historical records of the church. We are thankful to Rev. Dunlap and Mr. Woodard for leading the way in preserving our records, which have proved to be invaluable to us in our history search.

Charter members were given a special recognition. Thirteen of the original seventy-seven members were living at that time. The service included a "Memorial For Our Brethren Departed." Up to this point in time, our church had the privilege of sharing in the ministries of ten pastors. The sermon, preached by Rev. Dunlap, was "Rediscovering the Mission of the Church."

Russ Johnson wrote: "My association with this church is one of my greatest treasures. Being a Sunbeam, singing "Jesus Wants Me For A Sunbeam" with Mrs. Dorothy James; Sunday School with Mrs. Joyce DeLoatch, Mrs. Jean Ricks, and Mrs. Alma Brittle; singing in the Junior Choirs with Zelma Liverman; Bible School in June led by Mrs. Thelma Blythe with the mission stories told by Mrs. Leroy Taylor and Orange Crush and cookies in the parking lot under the shade of Mrs. Jenkins' pecan trees; and then, working with Mrs. Fleetwood - these are all the precious pieces of that treasure."

On January 5, 1966, during a special night service held for Deacon Ordination, four of our deacons were ordained: J. C. Davis, Kelly Vann, Godwin Butler and R. Jennings White, Jr.

In a service on January 16, 1966, memorial gifts that were made in connection with improvements to the sanctuary, were officially received and dedicated to the purpose of Christian worship. The memorial gifts were as follows:

The communion table and chairs were given in memory of Mrs. Annie G. Lane by Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood and Mr. John G. Lane.

The altar set, consisting of the candlesticks, flower vases, and cross, was given in honor of Mrs. Ruby Hedspeth by Benny Hedspeth.

The flower stands were given in memory of Mr. Rollin V. Nelson by his wife, Mrs. Ella Nelson, and in memory of Mr. and Mrs. David Burgess by Mrs. Sally Futrell and Mrs. Mary Lucy Britt.

The Dossal curtain was given in memory of Mrs. Bernice Atkinson Rawlings by M. B. M. Rawlings.

The registry desk in the foyer was given in memory of Mr. L. W. (Billy) Hedspeth by Mrs. Annie Lois Hedspeth, Mrs. Melba Blowe, Mrs. Patricia Smith, and Mr. Billy Hedspeth, Jr.

The pulpit Bible was given in honor of their children by Mr. and Mrs. David Simmons.

The Binders for the choir books were given in honor of Rev. Donald J. Dunlap, by Mr. and Mrs. L. T. Vinson.

The painting in the baptistery was painted and given to the church in memory of Henry Smith Self, by his daughter, Lou Self Evans.

Lou Self Evans was born in Tifton, Georgia, on July 10, 1902. She attended Bessie Tift College, a liberal arts college in Forsyth, Georgia. After living in Conway a number of years and teaching art, she began to paint baptisteries for Baptist churches in the local area. Her daughter, Lureese Evans Kapp, thinks that the first baptistery she painted was the one at Conway Baptist Church, which was painted soon after the new church was completed. She painted several in the surrounding area. One church burned and she painted the replacement. The furthest location was a baptistery painted in Red Oak. There is no accurate count of the baptisteries she painted. She painted at both white and black churches and enjoyed doing it. It gave her pleasure and a feeling that in a way she was giving thanks for the talent that she was given.

Mrs. Lou Evans also sketched the church that was used on the front of bulletins. Later Peggy Davis sketched a drawing of the church in pen and ink that has been used on visitors' cards, bulletins and Centennial plates. Note cards using this sketch were printed. Jackie Duncan also drew a picture of the church that was printed on cards.

During his stay with us, a library was set up and dedicated to Rev. Dunlap. The following notice, taken from minutes dated March 7, 1966, and May 1, 1966, of the Board of Christian Education concerning the naming of the library, was sent to Bernice Woodard by Helen Bridgers:

"It was brought before the board to ask the church to name the library for Rev. Donald J. Dunlap. After some discussion, Jim Vick moved that we recommend to the Board of Deacons that the church library be named and dedicated in honor of Rev. Donald J. Dunlap, Pastor 1961 - 1966 and that a brass plaque be placed in an appropriate place in keeping with others in the church. This to be done in appreciation of his time and work spent in planning and building the library and in helping to select and purchase the first order of books for same, some of which were a gift from him and his wife, Kay.

At the May meeting it was reported that the Board of Deacons approved the recommendation made by the Board of Christian Education to name the library the Donald J. Dunlap Library of Conway Baptist Church."

We are fortunate to have Mr. Sam Parke's devotion book in our history room. In it he listed Rev. Dunlap's first and last Conway Baptist sermon topics. Mr. Parke also included many scripture passages and thoughts that were especially meaningful to him. The following thoughts are from his journal:

"Many church members are like the farmer's well. It has only two faults: It froze up in the wintertime and dried up in the summertime.

What are you doing with God's time? Using it or wasting it?

Prayer is a partnership with God, but one's work is the fruit of that partnership."

Rev. Dunlap resigned in 1966 to accept a position at West End Baptist Church in Suffolk, Va. His final sermon as our pastor was delivered on February 27, 1966, and was entitled "More Than We Could Ask Or Think." Many changes had been made under his leadership. He had been kind, gentle, patient, understanding and supportive.

Rev. Russell L. Wimmer (1966 – 1969)

Rev. Russell L. Wimmer began his ministry on the third Sunday in June, 1966. He came to us from Branchville Baptist Church. Rev. Wimmer, his wife (Dot), and young son (Steve), were friendly and well-liked. He began his ministry by emphasizing schools of missions, which added to the program of Christian Education. Throughout his service to the church, his goals were to encourage spiritual growth, to reach others, and to help members develop a sense of stewardship of self and money. He encouraged the congregation to be positive rather than negative, to work together and to use our imaginations instead of doing things the old way. He encouraged unity and working for the good of all.

Choir robes were purchased for the Church Choir, the Cherub Choir and the Carol Choir that coordinated with the lovely color scheme of the sanctuary. The Friendly classroom became a combination classroom and choir room to accommodate the much needed storage space.

Betty Jo Woodard Chockley remembers that, as a young choir member, she rewrote several hymns so she could play them on her guitar. She accompanied a large group of young people in the mid 60's on her guitar. She also remembers the youth choir singing their favorite song, "Church in the Wildwood." She says, "We didn't need Mrs. Liverman's help with that song and we could probably be heard all over Conway!"

A picnic was given to all church members age 70 and older.

In 1967 insurance carried by the church was updated with the R. H. Johnson Agency bringing the total of insurance carried on the church building to \$125,000.00 due to improvements and appreciation. Silencers for the

pew racks were given by Mr. and Mrs. Gay Flythe. Card holders were given by Mr. and Mrs. Godwin Butler in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Everett Butler and were placed in the back of the church pews for the purpose of obtaining a more accurate record of visitors and informing the pastor of an illness or the need of a visit.

In 1968 the sanctuary, offices and third floor were air conditioned. It is interesting to note that the church had voted against air conditioning the building twice, but the motion passed the third time. A tennis court was placed on the parking lot including large nets used as backstops. During this time, the possibility of an elevator was discussed.

Rev. Wimmer appealed to the young people of the church and made quite an impact on their lives. One summer he and his wife accompanied them to summer camp at Ridgecrest. It is still a fond memory for many of them. The young people were charmed and influenced by the pastor throughout his stay with us.

Dr. J. A. Fleetwood, Jr. remembers that he, Linwood Woodard (Lit) and Rev. Wimmer were on a committee together and met at Dr. Fleetwood's office. It just so happened that before Rev. Wimmer and Mr. Woodard arrived for the meeting, a young woman came to Dr. Fleetwood's office about to have her baby. When Rev. Wimmer and Mr. Woodard arrived, Dr. Fleetwood immediately "put them to work" helping him deliver that baby! Dr. Fleetwood relates that after the baby arrived, Rev. Wimmer was as white as a sheet and that Linwood Woodard said it didn't bother him a bit. (But Mrs. Woodard reports that he could not stop talking about it!) As it turns out the mother named her baby for those two gentlemen. The baby's first and middle names were Russell and Linwood.

In March, 1968, the deacons paired up and visited two families per deacon team, inviting them to come to our revival services.

On August 18, 1968, William Edward James, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Edward James, lost his life in a swimming accident on Gaston Lake. His Sunday School class (boys and girls of high school age) voted to name the class the "Eddie James Class" in memory of their friend as a living memorial to a fine young man who was a member of that class.

Reverend Wimmer resigned effective February 2, 1969. Once again the work of the church was carried on ably by the Boards of Deacons and Trustees until a resident pastor could be found. Rev. Charles Paul, Dr. R. Kelly White and Nicky Martin, among others, filled the pulpit until a pastor could be secured.

On April 6, 1969, the church, recognizing the gift of Grady Nicholas Martin to preach the gospel, gave endorsement to his entrance into Southeastern Baptist Seminary at Wake Forest and licensed him to preach. He served this church as an interim pastor, teacher and deacon.

This excerpt from a column written in 1995 by Rev. Wimmer, pastor of Rural Hall, sums up the spirit of the years 1961-69 at Conway Baptist Church.

“For most of my life I have been getting a morning chuckle out of the “Peanuts” comic strip. Maybe you saw the one last week where Charlie Brown’s inept baseball team was seated on the bench.

I want to say to Snoopy, “How are you going to concentrate if you don’t stay awake? And how are you going to win if you don’t concentrate? And Snoopy, if you aren’t alert and awake, it will hurt your team.”

I see this comic strip as a call to all of us to stay awake and alert to God’s calling to us. In addition, it is a calling for us to be a team – to be together – to work together on common goals – to serve God together.

.....The scripture teaches that we are the body of Christ, that we have different responsibilities, talents and callings in that body, but we all have our part to play for the good of the entire body, the entire team.

Someone once said that the reason mountain climbers are tied together is to keep the sane ones from going home. That must have been said with a smile. We may have thought that they were tied together to keep them from getting lost in a snow storm, or to just keep everybody together.

The truth behind that bit of humor is that if you were a mountain climber, without the tied-together presence of other people you would probably give up the whole journey as crazy. You’d just go home. Sometimes church people give up the spiritual journey because they do not recognize the team concept of being a church. They think they are a Christian alone. And in discouragement, they just go home.

Well, you can’t give up this journey. You just can’t. We are all tied together by the redeeming love of Jesus.”

In Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all others.
(Romans 12:5)

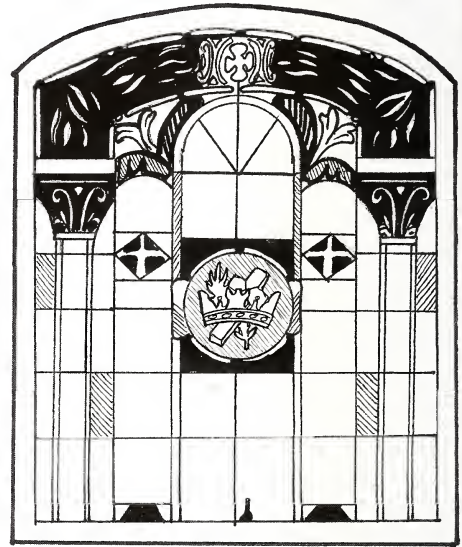
Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. (Revelation 2:10)

Chapter 6

THE FAITHFUL

CHURCH

1969 - 1979



Cross, Crown and Olive Branch

In 1969, Apollo II manned by Armstrong and Aldrin landed on the moon but this triumph was overshadowed by the turbulence of riots. The early 70's were marked by news of riots at Kent State and Washington by students protesting the Vietnam War. Several colleges were forced to close down in the face of these demonstrations. President Richard Nixon resigned following the Watergate scandal. The Vietnam War finally ended in 1973 claiming the lives of over 45,000 Americans.

Over against the uncertainties of the age stands the church of Jesus Christ. A statement in our 1967 church annual report reminded us what is most important:

“Of all the things that the church does within its building, worship is the most important. No other meeting or organization of the church is more important than the worship of God. Even the time that is given to learning and training sessions in the church is not as important as the time allotted for worship of Almighty God.

The church at worship is the gathered church, preparing itself to be the scattered church – scattered into the world, scattered into the respective places of business and learning and recreation where the church goes during the week.

There is a false belief on the part of some that worship is preaching. This is false because preaching is only a part of worship, it is not all of it. There are many elements in worship. Some of these are music, prayer, scripture, silence, preaching, and dedication of the worshiper.

The center of worship is not an altar or a choir or a man or a pulpit. The center of worship is God. All that is done in worship should be done to glorify Him and to seek His guidance.

To be a worshiper one must participate. In our worship services many opportunities are given for the congregation to participate. The congregation should participate because they are not the audience gathered to watch a performance by the preacher and choir, or to be entertained. In worship God is the audience. The minister, choir and congregation are all participants in worship.

The meaning and importance of worship must always be stressed and remembered. We must never minimize worship."

Rev. Walter S. Jones (1969-1977)

Rev. Walter S. Jones, his wife (Lorraine) and his sons (Walter, Jr. and Douglas) moved into the readied parsonage on June 1, 1969. Rev. Jones was a strong Baptist. He was outspoken against any actions that were not in keeping with the tenets of Christian ethics. He believed in the literal interpretation of the scriptures. He began his work with zeal, delivered evangelistic messages from the pulpit, and was faithful in visiting the sick at their homes and in the hospitals as well as those in the nursing homes.

Mrs. Jones was active in the choir and WMU, served as a Sunday school teacher and WMU President of the West Chowan Association.

BTU (Baptist Training Union) had been discontinued in 1968 due to lack of attendance so Rev. Jones began to lead Bible study and discussion groups on Sunday nights. This practice continues today.

As Pearl Nelson was leaving the service one Sunday, she told Rev. Jones that he had stepped on her toes with his message. He said, "If I did, I hit the wrong spot. I was aiming for your heart!"

As in the past, repairs were done as needed to keep our house of worship in mint condition. Among the many maintenance projects were the painting of the parsonage, replacing the bulletin board, completing a new classroom and putting the organ chimes in working order. Funds were applied to the air-conditioning debt.

In 1970 church membership was 395 resident members and 80 non-resident members. Sunday school enrollment was 377.

The church participated in an association school of missions. An ongoing radio ministry continued. The church began ordering the weekly *Biblical Recorder*.

Under the leadership of Rev. Jones, in 1969, 1970 and 1971, youth directors were hired for twelve weeks in the summer to work with various age groups. Those hired were Gary Hudson (a student from Chowan College), a second-year ministerial student from Campbell College, and Mrs. Michael Vann. The goals were to instruct our children in the Word of God, in Baptist beliefs and in church policy.

Take heart so that you may command your children to obey carefully all words of this law. (Deuteronomy 32:46-47)

During these years a GA coronation was held and several youth evangelism trips were taken to Greensboro. Rev. and Mrs. Jones also accompanied a group of young people to Richmond, Virginia, for a tour of the Foreign Mission Board facilities.

While at worship one Sunday (we always sat at the back), everyone sat in their finest and during those days it was very popular for ladies to have the BIG teased hair-styles. A lady sitting in front of us, all proper, attracted a bee to her "hair do." Well, that bee sat on her hair and his feet stuck to the hairspray holding all that teased hair in place. Needless to say, it was hard to listen to the sermon and watch that bee trying to get off her hair!

—Jackie Duncan Hardy

In 1970 the History Committee was formed. Alice Woodard, Jean Ricks and Peggy Davis were in charge of gathering and compiling our church history. They have done an outstanding job gathering and preserving information, pictures and newspaper articles that have proved to be invaluable in the research and compiling of our one-hundred-year history.

Jean Ricks, Alice Woodard and I were selected to serve on the history committee for our church. We were willing and excited because we all felt this was important for the future generations.

Jean has always been so involved in our WMU and she agreed to work on the missions and keep scrapbooks. Alice has been recording secretary of our church for many years and she has been so helpful in keeping her records. Since I worked for the local photographer I would get copies of every old picture pertaining to Conway Baptist and put them in scrapbooks.

One day we found an old broken frame and some pictures of servicemen from our church in a closet. We started asking for pictures of members who served in the military. All that we were able to collect were framed and now hang in the history room. We have collected many things for our history room and are proud to have them on display. We asked James Martin to fix a sign and so he carved a wooden one for our History Room. Christy Bolton made curtains, and the brotherhood had the original pulpit furniture reupholstered.

This history room helps us to see where we have been in the past one hundred

years and hopefully will help guide us in the future to be even more committed to God's will. —Peggy L. Davis

Our first pictorial directory was made in 1971.

In 1971 the stained-glass windows of the sanctuary and balcony were repaired and re-cemented. The Young Married Couples Class was formed with Anne White as teacher. Also in 1971, the West Chowan Association meeting was held at our church with Severn, Conway and Pendleton churches serving as co-hosts. Parkers Barbecue of Wilson furnished 275 plates and the ladies of the churches furnished the dessert.

Mrs. Julian (Zelma) Liverman, Music Director, reported that the music department had begun a fund to purchase handbells. In 1972 enough money was raised and donated to purchase our three octave set of handbells at a cost of \$1,600.00. Three bell choirs performed at the annual Christmas program with much enthusiasm shown by the choirs and congregation. New hymnals were also purchased at this time.

The budget for 1972 was \$32,468.00 with a weekly goal of \$624.39. This was the largest budget to date in the history of our church and its goal was met nearly every week.

Our church observed Baptist Men's Day on January 28, 1971, with Henry Vick presiding during the service. Thirty-five men filled the choir with Mrs. J. A. Fleetwood as organist and Russ Johnson accompanying her at the piano. Rev. Walter Jones directed the choir. Ushers were Wallace Long, Jim Martin, Keith Ricks, Gary Woodard, Steven Burgess and Benny Britt. Speakers were David Simmons (drugs), Lawrence Ricks (alcohol), R. Jennings White, Jr. (boys' work), Kelly Vann (evangelism) and Denny Vann (witnessing).

In February, 1972, a fundraiser, including a dinner, was held to benefit Kerwin Vann, who later lost his life due to diabetes. Members from Elm Grove Baptist Church came here to present "The Gate to Heaven."

In 1973, the deacons continued the practice of having a Deacon of the Month. That deacon was responsible for the devotional life of the deacons and the spiritual life of the church for a month. Each deacon had a list of families to whom they would minister. The deacons continue to be diligent in caring for the personal life and practices of the church. It is noted that during this time the deacons and the church took a strong stand against "Liquor by the Drink."

A special observance of the Lord's Supper was held in October, 1975. All deacons, both active and those who had rotated off the board, and their families, were recognized.

The church continued to participate in the radio ministry with WWDR in Murfreesboro. The pastor usually gave an average of ten devotionals and eight sermons through this ministry.

Salaries of the pastor, secretary, sexton, treasurer, and financial secretary were increased. A garage, including a storage building, was built for the church and parsonage.

In 1974 Reverend Jones was congratulated for being elected to the General Board of the Baptist State Convention.

This note was sent to the church family from the Sadie Brittle Vann family after her death in January, 1975.

Dear Christian Friends of Conway Baptist Church,

The children of Sadie Brittle Vann and their families are saying thank you and expressing our deep appreciation to everyone for prayers, visits, phone calls, food, flowers, cards, especially her pastor, Rev. Walter Jones, who did so much for her and us, the Deacons who visited her, her Doctors J. A. Fleetwood Sr. and Jr., who stood by her and helped her so much, her Sunday school class and other classes, her missionary circle and all other groups who did so much for her during her illness. The many ways of showing your love for her made her last days with us happier, thankful and gave her encouragement, knowing so many were sending so much love her way. We also express our gratitude to all who shared sympathy and the acts of love mentioned above to us after her death.

May God bless you as you walk through your Christian lives.

Laurie J. Vann on behalf of the Vann Children and their families

On February 9, 1975, the church voted to start an organ fund. The Allen Digital Computer Organ was recommended by the Organ Committee and was purchased from the Allen Organ Company for \$8,730.00 plus tax on October 26, 1975. It was dedicated on March 14, 1976, in honor of Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood (our faithful organist), who had shared her musical talents as organist, pianist and violinist for so many years.

Mrs. Fleetwood was elected to the Music Hall of Fame by the Piano Guild of the United States. She earned this prestigious honor by her sacrificial service to her church and community.

Mrs. Zelma Liverman, who served as our choir director from 1953 until 1984, was also honored. Knowing that she wished to attend Music Week at Glorietta, New Mexico, a number of friends honored Mrs. Liverman by sending her, with all expenses paid, to the conference.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him,

and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations. (Psalm 100 KJV)

In October, 1975, the Handbell Choir performed under the direction of Mrs. Zelma Liverman at Enon Chapel Baptist Church in Jacksonville, N.C., and later at Tarrytown Mall in Rocky Mount. Members of the choir were Doug Jones, Brian Simmons, Christie Davis, Deedie Butler, Cindy Woodard, Winnie Belch, Carole Ricks, Mona Simmons, Benji White, Vickie Wiley, Lisa Wiley and Sara Bryant.

The church adopted the following proposed changes in the church organization at its May 16, 1976, meeting:

That church officers be elected on or before October 1 of each year.

That the Board of Trustees be enlarged by three members and the position of custodian be eliminated. The purpose of this was to increase the members so that a building and maintenance committee could be formed within the group.

That all church board members be elected for three years and be eligible for re-election after only one year off the board.

That business meetings be held the second Sunday of each quarter at the eleven o'clock worship hour, eliminating the meeting in December.

That in the future our boards study needs of the church where they are given responsibility and bring recommendations for church approval at each quarterly meeting, giving reports to be recorded in the church minutes.

That we have a Church Council consisting of: Chairmen of all boards, Director of Music, Brotherhood Director, W.M.U. Director, Sunday School Director, and Director of Church Training. Church secretary is to be secretary of this council. The purpose of this committee shall be to correlate, coordinate the programs of the church and also to make a church calendar each year.

That a Youth Council be formed, consisting of nine members: six which represent the youth from grades eight through twelve and their President, and one from the college group, and two adults. The pastor will be an ex-officio member.

Projects for 1977 included the repairing of heating and air conditioning systems, painting the outside of the church and interior of the parsonage and repairing of the sanctuary ceiling. Gifts to missions continued to increase. Old church pews were sold for \$305.00.

During this time, church members numbered 395 resident members and 80 non-resident members. Sunday School enrollment was 377.

The resignation of Rev. Walter S. Jones became effective August 31, 1977. He accepted the position of Director of Missions in the Columbus Baptist Association. Truly his powerful sermons and leadership were missed. Mrs. Jones (Renee) would also be missed as she had endeared herself to us by teaching, being involved in the WMU and by

singing in the choir. She also served as WMU director of the West Chowan Association during her stay in Conway.

Rev. Randolph Phillips served as interim pastor while the Pulpit Committee searched for a new pastor.

Mrs. Jones shared these stories with us in May, 2005.

Mrs. Kelly White, who lived next to the church and was a good friend of Rev. and Mrs. Jones, requested the assistance of Mrs. Jones in making Shrimp Newberg for a Literary Guild meeting that Mrs. White was hosting. An ingredient in the recipe was cooking sherry which Mrs. Jones did not have. Mrs. White brought it to her and for the first time ever Mrs. Jones used cooking sherry in a recipe. The dish was reported to be delicious.

Dr. and Mrs. Kelly White walked over to say goodbye to Rev. and Mrs. Jones when they were leaving Conway upon his acceptance of the DOM position. Dr. White wanted to say a prayer before they left. He had suffered a stroke and had trouble with his words. But Mrs. Jones reported that when he prayed, the words flowed easily and beautifully!

Rev. Doug Jones (son of Rev. Walter Jones) was our guest minister on July 17, 2005, as part of our Centennial Celebration. He related that he attended our church as a young boy from the age of seven to sixteen during some of his formative years. He thanked those in our church who influenced him in his Christian walk. Our church played a part in his decision to serve the Lord as a minister. Doug shared that Dr. Kelly White had a tremendous influence and impact on him as a young man. Dr. White encouraged him and told Doug that God had a plan for his life.

Rev. Walter Jones wrote: "For the blessings, both spiritual and physical, we give thanks to our Heavenly Father for the rich heritage He has blessed us with. From these blessings, we receive strength to press forward to even greater endeavors in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord."

Rev. Jess Willard Crosswhite (1977 – 1979)

Rev. Jess Willard Crosswhite, affectionately known as "Tommy," was called to serve Conway Baptist Church on November 6, 1977. The pulpit committee held a "Get Acquainted Reception" for Rev. Crosswhite and his family on October 29. The Crosswhites had two small children (Michael Todd and Kristie Lynn) and were blessed with a third (Brian) while serving at Conway Baptist Church.

Rev. Crosswhite began his service by promoting church training on Sunday night and prayer meeting, Bible study and youth meeting on Wednesday nights. He guided the church in making necessary repairs to the church and parsonage. The classrooms were made more comfortable with the installation of air conditioning units.

In 1978 new floor covering and countertop were installed in the parsonage, a mimeograph machine was purchased, a time clock was installed in the steeple and repairs were done to the church furnace, furnace room and the nursery bathroom. Amplifying equipment was installed in the sanctuary, social hall and nursery. Shrubbery was trimmed, painting was completed and cork board was installed.

During this time the church participated in a softball league. It was reported that the Baptist men won more games than the Baptist women but everyone had a good time.

Rev. Bennie Pledger, who was ordained at Conway Baptist Church in 1950, was our revival speaker in March, 1978.

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

Our deacons and church voted in 1978 that the collected offerings would be given in addition to the budgeted amount for missions offerings. This was a tremendous act of faith and an indicator of the feelings of the members regarding missions. The deacons also voted in favor of our church joining with the Southern Baptist Convention in the Bold Mission Thrust to run from 1979-1984. During this time the goals were to double missions giving, to increase baptisms and to double offerings. An addition of \$2,000.00 for State Missions and \$700.00 for Chowan College was added to the budget.

Rev. Tommy Crosswhite resigned effective January 21, 1979. He was offered a position with a company in Tennessee and after considering carefully and prayerfully, he and his family decided to accept this offer.

On February 25, 1979, Reverend Nicholas Martin became our interim pastor until a full-time pastor could be found.

The Pastoral Search Committee reported they were united in their efforts to bring the right man of God to us, and they felt that they had found the right one in Rev. James E. Hester. The vote to accept him was unanimous.

Rev. James E. Hester (1979 – 1997)

Rev. James E. Hester, his wife (Mercile), and youngest son (Tim), moved into the parsonage in time for Rev. Hester to preach his first sermon on the second Sunday in August, 1979.

Before the new pastor moved into the parsonage, some improvements needed to be made. Several rooms were painted, the parsonage was air conditioned, new carpet installed and draperies were replaced. In September, 1979, a den was added to the parsonage.

Other improvements to the church that year included installation of a sound system, purchase of a piano for the Primary Department and the donation of a piano, by Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Burgess, for the Fellowship Classroom. Mr. and Mrs. Burgess also paid to have all of our full time pastors' pictures made and framed. These pictures hang in the hall behind the pulpit. After their deaths, the Burgess family has carried on this tradition.

Rev. Hester began his ministry continuing most of the activities of the church and proved to be versatile and innovative as well. He continued to participate in the radio ministry. He was faithful in visiting the sick and needy. Many times he was able to show his wonderful ability to be a friend, counselor and negotiator. This endeared him to his congregation and friends.

Rev. Hester's sermons were evangelistic, timely and well delivered. Often he used humor in his sermons, which added to the appeal of his messages. He was a popular after dinner speaker as well. His speeches always ended with a spiritual message. Rev. Hester continued the newsletter and renamed it "The Link." He added a personal message from the pastor and closed each message with "Till He Comes!"

During their time here, Mrs. Hester completed her college degree and taught several years in the local school. She often shared her musical ability by playing the piano and singing in the choir. She was also active in the WMU.

In July, 1979, Mrs. Gertrude Lanier resigned as treasurer at the end of the church year, having served 35 years! Mrs. Gertrude Lanier and Mrs. Myrld Woodard, who had also served as financial secretary for 35 years, were honored at a dinner in appreciation of their years of service.

Gene Lanier related that his mother, Mrs. Gertrude Lanier, served faithfully for many years as our church treasurer. She was a true Southern Lady who would not receive company or leave the house without looking her best. Mrs. Lanier wrote all of the checks for the church, including the check for the pastor's salary. Rev. Hester came by her house one morning to pick up his check. When he knocked on the door, she told him she would be with him shortly and he sat on the porch waiting. Thirty minutes later, she opened the door and gave him his check. She was finely dressed including appropriate jewelry and makeup.

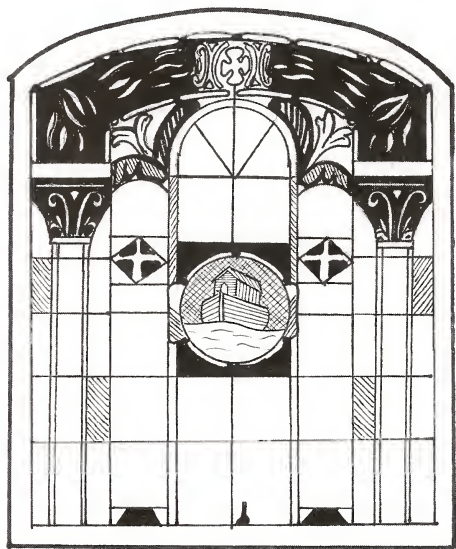
The Constitution and Bylaws Committee recommended that the jobs of secretary, treasurer and financial secretary be combined. The position of secretary then became a full-time secretary-treasurer position. In November, 1979, Mrs. Stewart (Vicki) Taylor was hired as church secretary.

On November 4, 1979, a memorial fund for cushions for the sanctuary and balcony was begun. Roger Bryant had solicited pledges to cover the cost before presenting this recommendation to the Board of Trustees. Green cushions were purchased to complement the carpet and décor of the sanctuary.

A new tradition was begun with a church-wide Sunday School picnic/cook-out including fun and games for all. Several years later, this became our Winter Celebration.

Doug Jones' message and scripture reference on July 17, 2005, was a balm to our ears. We will do well to hold it close to our hearts as we face a world that seems out of control. This message was relevant in the decade of the 1970's when Doug Jones was growing up in our midst and it is relevant today. His message is taken from 2 Kings 6:15-17. Elisha's servant could not see God's protecting army until God opened his eyes. **And Elisha prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes so he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.** (2 King 6:17) What an exciting lesson! We need to look around us. We may not see them with our own eyes, but we can be totally sure that God's angels are there to look after His children! We fail to realize that we live in a spiritual world. God is in control in this spiritual world. We need to look up and see that God is in control. How can we claim the power of God and apply it to our lives today? First, pray to God and trust in Him. (Open our eyes that we might see.) Second, exercise our faith. Take that step and move forward. Third, surrender our lives to God to be used as His servant.

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession – to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14)



Noah's Ark

Chapter 7

OUR HAVEN

OF REST

1980 - 1984

During the early 80's, cellular phone networks were started in the United States. Smallpox was eradicated but AIDS was identified. In a world filled with distress and turbulence, our church has been a haven of rest for us and an ark of God's provision for His people. It is fitting that in 1990, our resident artists, Twyla Duke and Gurney Burgess, painted a scene on the nursery wall of Noah's Ark.

In April, 1980, it was learned that a generous monetary gift had been donated by Mrs. Helen Bridgers to establish an elevator fund for the church. Thus the fund for an elevator was begun after years of talk. Records show that the new fund, however, did not produce immediate results. The elevator would wait another decade.

In August, 1980, our church voted to change the dates of our Sunday School and church year to run from October 1st through September 30th. In 1981 the church first observed an annual Homecoming day to be held each year on the Sunday nearest the Founding Day of October 9th.

In November 128 families were pictured in our second directory.

In the association news, West Chowan Baptist Association became self supporting in 1980 and voted not to request funds from the State Convention.

In September, 1980, the board of deacons voted unanimously to recommend to the Constitution Committee that women be made eligible to serve on the Board of Deacons of Conway Baptist Church. Mrs. Bettie Long Taylor and Mrs. Nannie Butler Francis were the first women to serve on the Board of Deacons in 1984. It was said that they proved to be model deacons and have served each year on the board.

The church's 75th Anniversary was celebrated in November, 1980, with an attendance of more than 500. Everyone enjoyed seeing old friends. Much planning had gone into making this Homecoming Celebration a huge success. Rev. James Hester, pastor, welcomed the members and guests. Paul Sykes, the only surviving charter member, was recognized. Rev. Bennie Pledger brought greetings and Rev. Donald Dunlap, our first full time pastor, reminisced about the years he served the church. R. Jennings White, Jr. read the history compiled by his mother, Mrs. R. Jennings White, Sr. Rev. Henry Powell, West Chowan Association Director of Missions, spoke briefly of the church's progress. The keynote speaker was Rev. Roy Smith, Associate General Secretary-Treasurer of the N. C. Baptist State Convention. Special music was presented by the Children's Choirs and the Sanctuary Choir under the direction of Mrs. Zelma Liverman and Mrs. Gail Martin. Musicians for the service were Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood with her violin, Russ Johnson at the organ, Mrs. Elsie Hedspeth and Mrs. Phyllis Mann at the piano. Following the service a bountiful lunch was enjoyed by all.

A fund raiser of our youth group, led by Faye Davis, was the singing telegrams for Valentine's Day. For a cost of \$3.00 in town or \$3.50 out of town, several young ladies would deliver a valentine sing-a-gram to special friends and loved ones. Over the next couple of years the "Singing Sweethearts" included Cindy Woodard, Deedi Butler, Christi Davis, Meg White, Michelle Britt, Michelle Davis and Brett Duncan. They wore red vests, white tops, short skirts, headpiece and red knee socks. The money was used for the older youth group and the bus fund. It was said that the "Singing Sweethearts" enjoyed this project as much as those who received the sing-a-grams.

A church council was formed to coordinate all activities with each organization of the church, to put together a church calendar of activities without conflicting with other organizations, to share problems and ideas and to strive to uphold and promote the church. The Council would consist of chairmen of deacons and trustees, Sunday school director, one representative of the youth council and the pastor.

Linda Knight, who served as GA leader from 1976 through 1994, wrote:

"Being a GA leader in our church was quite an adventure. We enjoyed many hours learning about missions, attending overnight camps at Chowan College, Fall Fun Days and Father/Daughter banquets. The girls always loved swimming at camp. When my two daughters were members of GA's we had several sleepovers at my house. The summer my son was a baby, we decided to camp in my back yard. Of course the girls thought they were going to run in and out of the house all night. Well, I couldn't have them waking up the baby so we "roughed" it outside all night long as if we were in the deep woods.

Through the years I have worked with a lot of girls and they were all the best. My heart is blessed today to see these girls as young women now serving as WMU members here in our church and other churches. Our girls were always eager to learn about missions and how Christ can be served through missions. It has been a blessing for me to serve WMU here in Conway Baptist Church and do my part to see missions continue to grow in the years to come."

The stained glass windows in the church were repaired and re-lettered by A & H Art and Stained Glass Company. They reconditioned the windows and installed plexi-glass to preserve the windows.

The church decided to purchase a bus for youth and adult activities. A 1973 Chevrolet bus with a seating capacity of sixty-six children or forty-four adults was purchased. Stories have been circulated about the fun and fellowship connected with this much-used bus.

During one trip with a bus load of ladies (Mr. James Martin was the bus driver), the bus was temporarily parked under an overhang so the ladies could depart the bus at the front door. When all of the ladies got off the bus, the bus "rose" due to the lack of weight on the bus. The additional height of the bus caused the top of the bus to hit the roof. Mr. James had to ask the ladies to get back on board so that the bus could be moved out from under the overhang.

In 1982, Mr. and Mrs. Hiram Draper, Jr. and Mr. and Mrs. Russell H. Johnson, Jr. donated a Delux Stair Glide chair-lift in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Wiley Sumner and Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Francis. The chair-lift was used to transport handicapped persons from the ground level to the auditorium level so that they would be able to participate in the worship services. For many years the elevator project had been put aside for financial and esthetic reasons.

That same year a new Sunday School class for young married couples was begun. It was named "The James Hester Class" after its teacher. The class continues to be a large class with a group of members close to the same age, who have stayed in Conway or have come back to Conway to live after college. Rev. Hester told them at the formation of the class that they would be the future leaders of the church. As time has advanced, this has proved to be a true statement.

In July, 1982, WMU sponsored pastor appreciation week and gave an ice cream party for the seniors in our church.

In 1983, Galatia Baptist Church challenged our Sunday School with an attendance contest for the month of March. After a tremendous response at each church with all classrooms overflowing, Conway Baptist lost the challenge by a slim margin and fed a meal to the members of Galatia Baptist for their prize. We technically lost the challenge, but who could say we lost when the church and Sunday School classes were filled to overflowing!

Perfect attendance awards for Sunday School were given to several members, including Mr. Paul Vinson, who was honored for his perfect attendance for twenty-two years.

In 1983, our goal was to reach all the people in our community as prospective members. C. J. Watson, Sunday School director, asked each class to appoint an outreach chairman to come up with ways and means of reaching out to everyone. An apple was given to each visitor who attended and also to the one who invited the visitor. For a while the Radio Ministry continued to be a part of our service to the community.

For many years Sunrise Services were held each Easter morning in the yard of Conway School with a flat bed trailer used as a stage. These services were held jointly with our church and Conway Methodist Church.

For a while the Friendly Group greeted new families to our community and our church with a welcome book. The book included favorite poems and scriptures, a town and county map, emergency phone numbers (including doctor's number), a brief history of our town and various notes of interest. The newcomers were visited and given a book.

In July, 1983, a number of improvements were made to the building. The large assembly room on the third floor was divided, creating additional classroom space, and carpet was installed. Also a new water cooler and tape recorder were purchased. The outside of the parsonage was painted.

On July 19, 1983, the Constitution and By-laws were adopted as presented by the Constitution and By-laws Committee. These documents, featured in Chapter 21, state the name, purpose, statement of faith, church covenant, character and doctrine of the church. Also included are membership, dismissal and termination of membership procedures. Members of this committee were R. H. Johnson, Jr., chairman, Lawrence W. Ricks, Sandra P. Vann and Brown Burgess.

In October, 1983, the BYW (Baptist Young Women) was formed with fifteen members who have become a close knit group. They contin-

ue to serve the Lord through involvement with missions. This group began the twenty-year tradition of presenting a white Bible to each new bride to guide her in her marriage and life.

The Couples Class began making ornaments for the Chrismon tree. Chrismon means a monogram for Christ. Each ornament represents a sign or a symbol of reference to our Lord. New ornaments were added each year for several years. Thus began the use of a beautiful Chrismon tree in the sanctuary at Christmas for the next decade, followed by the poinsettia tree.

In April, 1983, Jackie Duncan became our first full-time secretary/treasurer. She served faithfully, efficiently and gracefully until June 6, 1997, when she resigned due to her upcoming marriage and move.

On April 1, 1984, Mr. Paul Scarborough Sykes, our last living charter member, died. It is recorded in James F. Martin's early minutes that Mr. Sykes was expelled in April, 1922, as was the practice at that time, for being behind in his dues or assessments. Mr. Sykes related to Rev. Hester that he moved to Virginia and sent his money to the church but it was never received. He later rejoined our church. The following was printed in our newsletter at the time of his death.

"Mr. Sykes was born March 17, 1894. He joined Conway Baptist Church at the beginning of our church in 1905. He was eleven years old at the time. He lived 90 full years. He never married. He had a great love for his Savior. His regular attendance was an inspiration to all of us who saw him each Sunday. His only handicap we know of was his hearing, but he found a place close to the front where he could hear the singing and the message."

Some of the 1984 projects were the repair of the fellowship hall heating system, basement bathroom and beginner classrooms, the purchase of additional fellowship hall tables, a cabinet for the sound system and Plexiglas for basement windows. Also the inside of the parsonage was painted. In addition a collection was taken for the tornado victims in the Lewiston area.

On May 6, 1984, a Sunday School picnic was held on Sunday afternoon. The activities included softball, horse shoes and volleyball which was enjoyed by all. The menu included hamburgers and hotdogs with all the trimmings.

We are blessed to have in our midst so many talented people. Over the years we have enjoyed the poems that our resident poet, Faye Davis, has shared with us. These have appeared in our bulletins on special occasions. The following poem reminds us that we are to focus on our Savior and spread the **Word**.

THE MOUNTAIN TOP

—*Faye Davis*

I have been on the mountain top
Where I stand so close to God.
Where there was nothing that could touch me
As I stood on holy sod.
The feeling was, oh, so great
I did not want to come down.
But how could God use me
Just standing and looking around?

Lord, why must I leave this place?
There's nothing that can compare
To this feeling of uplifting,
Surely not down there.
But He said, "Dear child,
It is only in the valley low
That you can serve me best;
That's where I bid you go.

Walk among my children
Who need to find a friend.
Tell them about a place
Where their troubles have an end.

Point their eyes upward
To this mountain top.
Tell them of their Saviour;
Work and do not stop.

Tell them Jesus died
On an old rugged cross.
So their sins would be forgiven,
So their life would not be lost.

"Draw all you can unto me
Before this world comes to an end.
Because you can spend eternity
On this mountain top again."

Chapter 8

OUR STAINED GLASS MEMORIAL WINDOWS

From the beginning of the history search, I was drawn to our stained glass windows and the meanings of the symbols depicted in them. Pen and ink sketches of our windows by Gurney Burgess are featured at the beginning of most chapters. Pictures of our window symbols, taken by Carol Lowe, photographer, are featured in this chapter. Bobby Taylor researched the symbols as to their meanings. Some meanings were obvious while others were complete surprises! I have taken the liberty to interpret the symbols as follows in this chapter. There are several symbols that may have additional meanings.

We uncovered no information relating to the history of our windows. They were installed when the new church was built, but we do not know who selected the windows or symbols. Donations were given to fund the cost of most of the windows as the names of the donors, including dates of birth and death, are inscribed on each window.

If you count them, you will find a total of nineteen stained glass windows. Twelve windows are located in the sanctuary. Four windows are located in the vestibule and the stairs leading up to the balcony. Three small windows are located in the balcony. The balcony windows were most likely purchased by the church because donors are not noted. The artistic beauty found in each window and the beautiful meaning of each symbol make each window a prized possession. As you peruse the following pages and when you gaze upon our windows as you enter our sanctuary, please reflect on the rich and wonderful meaning of each one. We are surrounded by these symbols that remind us of different aspects of our Christian faith.

On page 75, I have taken the meanings of our window symbols in another direction. It was obvious to me that many of them point directly to Jesus. I wondered if they all pointed to Jesus. By pursuing this train of thought, I came to realize that each window could represent a Person of the Trinity: the Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit. Who knows? That may have been the original intention of our church fathers.

—Wanda Taylor

The window on page 69 includes the symbol of **THE BURSTING POMEGRANATE**

The bursting pomegranate is a symbol of the resurrection and the power of our Lord, who was able to burst the tomb and come forth. This window was given in memory of Mariah J. Hedspeth (1847-1920).

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." (John 11: 25-26)



CHURCH ON THE ROCK

The rock is a symbol of our Lord. The motif symbolizes the church built on the firm foundation of Jesus Christ, our Savior. This window was given by John M. Vick (1889-1956) and Nellie V. Vick (1880-1958).

On this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. (Matthew 16:18)

WHEAT

Wheat is a symbol of Jesus as the Bread of Life. This window was given by Benjamin J. Ricks (1867-1956) and in memory of Mary E. Ricks (1874-1942).

Jesus replied, "I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." (John 6:35)



CROSS, CROWN & OLIVE BRANCH

This motif is a symbol of the reward of the faithful in the life after death to those who believe in the crucified Savior. This window was given in memory of Rufus T. White (1867-1928) and Mariah E. White (1859-1927).

Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. (Revelation 2:10)

FLOWERING POMEGRANATE

When the pomegranate flowers, the seeds burst forth and are scattered representing the Body of Christ scattering the seeds of the gospel. This window was given in memory of Robert Jackson Burnett (1848-1929) and Winifred Holoman Burnett (1876-1946).

The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. (Matthew 9:37-38)



ANCHOR & CROSS

The motif of the anchor and cross is a symbol of the Christian's hope in Christ. This window was given by E. C. Vick (1878-1955) and Zata N. Vick (1880-1955).

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. (Hebrews 6:19-20)



CROSS, ANCHOR, OLIVE BRANCH = FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY

The cross symbolizes faith; the anchor, hope; the olive branch, charity or love. This window was given in memory of Abner Lassiter (1840-1928).

And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:13)

HARP

The harp is recognized as an attribute of King David. It represents the Psalms and all music and instruments that are used to praise and glorify God.

I will praise you with the harp for your faithfulness, O my God; I will sing praise to you with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel. (Psalm 71:22)



HOLY BIBLE

This is a picture of the Bible, God's Word. This window was given by A. O. Woodard, Sr. (1897-1990) and Beatrice B. Woodard (1896-1990).

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. (Psalm 119:11)





STAR

This motif is the Star of Bethlehem and represents Jesus' incarnation.

I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel. (Numbers 24:17)

LAMP

The lamp is a symbol of the Word of God, the light of the world. This window was given in memory of Roger W. Burgess (1914-1940).

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105)



THE GOOD SHEPHERD

This motif is a symbol of Jesus, the good Shepherd. This window was given in memory of Fred Odom (1901-1944).

I am the good Shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (John 10:11)

TABLETS OF STONE

This motif is a picture of the Ten Commandments and represents God's law.

This window was given by Marshall Francis (1897-1970) and Nettie B. Francis (1901-1964).

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. (Matthew 22:37-38)



SHIP

The ship is a symbol of the church providing safety and refuge. This window was given in memory of D. Hersey Hedspeth (1876-1934) and D. Maynard Hedspeth (1901-1948).

He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. (Mark 4:39)



NOAH'S ARK

This motif symbolizes God's judgment on sin and His promise of salvation and provision for His people. This window was given in memory of Noah Burgess (1885-1946).

The Lord then said to Noah, "Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation." (Genesis 7:1)

OLIVE BRANCH

The olive branch is recognized as a symbol of peace. In the story of the Great Flood, a dove returned to Noah with an olive branch to let him know that the flood waters had abated, and that the episode of God's judgment was over. This window was given in memory of John H. Odom (1860-1937).

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (John 14:27)



CHALICE & CROSS

The chalice with a cross is a symbol of our Lord's obedient suffering and the agony of His passion. This window was given in memory of Fannie Belle Futrell Boone (1868-1945).

Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

(Matthew 26:27-28)



KEYS

The crossed keys recall Peter's confession and our Lord's gift to him of the keys of the kingdom. The two keys represent dual authority to open heaven to repentant sinners and to lock heaven to the unrepentant.

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." (John 20:21-23)



DOVE

The dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. It is taken from the story of Jesus' baptism, where the Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove. The nimbus around its head identifies the Spirit as a member of the Trinity. This window was given in memory of J. E. Taylor (1879-1948).

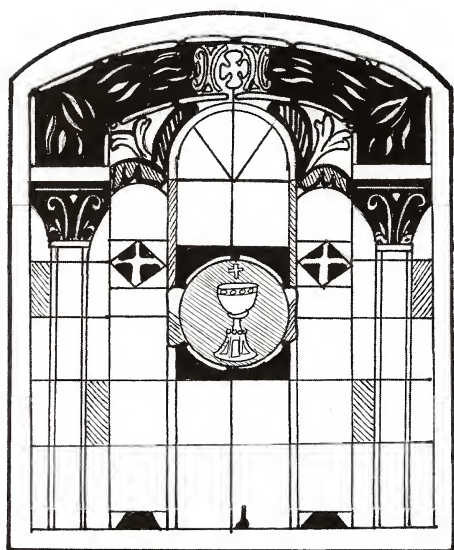
As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. (Matthew 3:16)



Stained Glass Window Symbols

Anchor & Cross	Jesus Christ, our righteousness, holiness and redemption, our hope (1 Corinthians 1:30)
Anchor, Cross & Olive Branch	Jesus Christ, our hope, our Savior (John 4:42)
Bursting Pomegranate	Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life (John 11:25-26)
Chalice & Cross	Jesus Christ, our suffering Savior (1 Cor. 5:7)
Church on Rock	Jesus Christ, the sure foundation (Matt. 16:18)
Cross, Crown & Olive Branch	Jesus Christ, King of Kings (Isaiah 62:3)
Dove	Holy Spirit, with the glory of God (Matt. 3:16)
Flowering Pomegranate	Jesus Christ, Lord of the harvest (Matt. 9:38)
The Good Shepherd	Jesus Christ, Great Shepherd of the sheep (John 10:11)
Harp	Our Glorious Father, worthy of our praise (Psalm 57:11)
Holy Bible	Jesus Christ, Alpha & Omega, the beginning and the end (John 1:1-2)
Keys	Jesus Christ, the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6)
Lamp	Jesus Christ, the Light of the world (John 8:12)
Noah's Ark	Jesus Christ, God's Promised Savior (Eph. 1:13)
Olive Branch	Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace (John 14:37)
Ship	Our Father, our refuge and strength (Psalm 9:9)
Star	Incarnate Jesus, Immanuel (Matthew 1:23)
Tablets of Stone	Righteous Father, Judge of all the earth (Isaiah 33:22)
Wheat	Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life (John 6:35)

Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matthew 26:27-29)



Chalice and Cross

Chapter 9

A CHURCH

WITH A VISION

1985-1989

The nuclear accident at Chernobyl and the explosion of the space shuttle, Challenger, just 74 seconds after take off-filled our news and our hearts in 1986. Later in the decade, after 28 years of denying East Germans their freedom, while Ronald Regan was President of the United States, the Berlin wall came down.

In June, 1984, our church body had the vision to take another step in faith. Plans were begun at this time for a building project. A new addition was needed and would be built to the left of the church. This addition included a fellowship hall with a stage, pastor's study, church office, kitchen, restrooms and storage room. A covered driveway would connect the church to the new structure with easy accessibility to either building in inclement weather and for the handicapped. The new fellowship hall would be used for socials, weddings, receptions, family gatherings and children's dramas. The parking area would be extended back to the property line.

On Sunday, March 31, 1985, ground was broken for the new addition. Rev. James Hester read scripture and led in prayer. Fletcher Bryant, chairman of the Board of Trustees, and Lawrence Ricks, chairman of the Board of Deacons, were photographed with shovels. Behind them were trustees, deacons and the congregation. Many took the shovel that day and were photographed at the groundbreaking event.

Members and friends of Conway Baptist Church dedicated the new education-recreation facility on November 9, 1986, when Kelly M. Davis, contractor, presented the building to Mike Belch, chairman of the Trustees, who received it on behalf of the church. Rev. James E. Hester presided at the service at which J. W. Hutchens, Director of Evangelism for the N.C. Baptist State Convention, brought the message and R. G. Pucket, Editor of the *Biblical Recorder*, led in the formal dedication of the building which cost \$269,000.00. The church was full with nearly 400 in attendance that day. Over 90 families gave to the Building Fund that day for this special occasion with the collection being \$20,834.00. The church would owe less than \$100,000.00 on the two-story addition.

Fletcher Bryant was the chairman of the Trustees (followed by Mike Belch) during the building of the fellowship hall. The Bryant family reports that during that time, Fletcher would "eat, breathe and talk" the building project. He, as well as other church leaders, put in a tremendous amount of time and effort to see this project completed. Fletcher and Ralph Bryant built and donated the dollies under the stage used to store our tables and chairs. Among the many other groups and individuals who made donations was the Friendly Group, who donated a dishwasher and utensils for the kitchen. Gravel and sand for the parking lot and foundation of the new building were donated by W. R. Bishop. Several members (Fletcher Bryant, Kelly Vann, Mike Belch, Ralph Bryant and Jimmy Woodard) furnished trucks and drivers, saving the church a sizable amount of money.

The ground floor of our new addition consists of 5,100 square feet, with 3,000 additional feet upstairs for future development. After years of serving as storage space, the upstairs project is nearing completion at this time. When finished, the upstairs will provide us with space to use as a classroom, storage room and large recreational room.

Baby dedications are traditionally held each year around Mother's Day. The parents pledge to raise their children in Christian homes and to teach them the Word of God. The church members pledge to stand by these children and to support them in their Christian walk. On June 17, 1984, several babies were dedicated. They were Ashley Lynn Britt, Anthony Alan Richey, Jason Burton Ricks and Joni Eileen Woodard.

In January, 1985, the GA's toured the Foreign Missions Headquarters in Richmond, Virginia. Anne White was WMU director.

On April 2, 1985, WMU members attended the Association WMU meeting at Cashie in Windsor and enjoyed a fashion show of 100 years of fashions. WMU would celebrate their centennial celebration in 1986. In January, 1986, Conway Baptist WMU celebrated WMU's 100th birthday with a party. Mrs. Jean Ricks, WMU Centennial Chairman, presented a history of the WMU.

Mrs. Kitty White was recognized at the West Chowan Baptist Women's Recognition Service at Murfreesboro Baptist Church. She was congratulated for her service and leadership in the Woman's Missionary Union at Conway Baptist Church and in the West Chowan Baptist Association. The names of three ladies from Conway Baptist Church, who had been outstanding leaders in our WMU, were submitted for consideration by the Selection Committee. Those ladies were Mrs. Bettie Taylor, Mrs. Janie Shearin and Mrs. Kitty White.

On April 27, 1986, Mei Yen of Peking, China, violinist and first year Chowan College student, performed at the worship service which included a Baby Dedication Service and Baptismal Service.

September 7, 1986, was a special day in our church when our beloved Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood was honored for her 58 years of service and dedication as organist, pianist and violinist. Her willingness to perform her duties never faltered. She was much loved by her many students, each one receiving her gift of music. It is impossible to measure the rippling effect of Mrs. Fleetwood's ministry. She passed her gift on to her students, who are in turn using their gifts for the glory of God. Hers is truly a ministry that did not stop with her death.

Russ Johnson served as organist until June, 1987. He resigned to take a position as organist in Nashville, N. C. Mercile Hester then played the organ for us, followed by Wanda Taylor.

Rev. Hester tells of an incident that occurred when Mrs. Fleetwood was playing the organ at one of many weddings. During the processional while she was playing Wagner's "Bridal March" from *Lohengrin*, known to most of us as "Here Comes the Bride," her music fell to the floor! Being the seasoned musician that she was, she continued playing the first line of "Here Comes the Bride" over and over again with one hand on the keyboard and both feet on the pedals, while she fumbled below with her left hand trying to retrieve her music. She finally reached her music and was able to finish the processional!

In 1986 we participated in "Good News America, God Loves You," as part of the Southern Baptist Convention revival emphasis. During four

consecutive weeks in March, revivals were held all over the United States in Baptist churches. Two hundred New Testament Bibles were purchased and delivered to families as part of the campaign.

Andy Woodard remembers that the young folk would sit up in the balcony when he and his friends were around fifteen. Andy says that they were just being teenagers, but were probably misbehaving a bit. Rev. Hester closed the service one particular Sunday by saying, "We are going to do things a little differently today." He called on Andy to pray. Andy was so nervous and doesn't remember what he said, but he reportedly "muddled" his way through a closing prayer. From then on, the teenagers had a prayer written down on a piece of paper, stuck in a hymnbook, in case any of them were asked to pray! Rev. Hester adds a little to this story. He recalls that years later Andy and his wife, Natalie, attended a service in Greenville at which Rev. Hester was preaching. At the close of the service, Andy came up to Rev. Hester and told him that he had a hard time concentrating on the sermon, thinking he would be called on to pray!

Rev. Hester was active in the West Chowan Baptist Association where he has served as President of the Pastors' Conference, Chairman of the Evangelism Committee, Chairman of the Committee on Committees, Trustee and Moderator of the Association. Rev. Hester and Dr. Willis McCloud founded the Minister's Education Council for the Northampton County Schools. For many years Rev. Hester was chairman of this council, from which many students have benefited.

In 1987 our church was congratulated for leading the West Chowan Baptist Association in baptisms and being second in support of the Cooperative Program.

Lessie's Florist of Murfreesboro agreed to furnish and deliver flowers for the year. They faithfully continued that service for many years. Since then Backyard Florist and Nell's Florist have provided beautiful flowers that have graced our sanctuary. Distribution of the flowers after the services was first determined by the Flower Committee. Eventually the WMU groups were asked to be responsible for their distribution.

In 1987 the Goodwill Bible Class, with 51 members, had a group picture taken on the front steps of the church.

Conway Baptist Church has always contributed to the needs of the community. In 1987 it began coordinating the distribution of meals in the "Meals on Wheels Program." Volunteers continue to faithfully deliver the meals in good and bad weather.

In February, 1987, a Sweetheart Banquet was held. A delicious meal was served to all by the Friendly Group. Following the meal our first Womanless Wedding was held. Rev. James E. Hester wrote and directed the wedding, uniting the bride, Julia Shudnobetter and groom, Les

Makeadeal. Everyone had a great time, especially the participants!

Over the years we have participated in several World Mission conferences. One of these was held November 15 – 18, 1987. A different missionary spoke to us each night. One of the missionaries would stay with a church member the entire week. During this particular week, Mrs. Bettie L. Taylor housed our missionary. Volunteers invited the speakers for lunch and dinner during the week. James and Emmie Martin, among others, housed our missionaries a few years later.

Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:33)

It is indeed a happy occasion for a church when the nursery needs to be enlarged! In 1987 the fellowship hall in the basement was divided into two rooms and a hall. The Lonnie Sasser Class relinquished their room for the expanded nursery and would occupy one room in the divided basement with the Goodwill Bible Class occupying the other. For many years, Euzelia Tillery and Aileen Belch kept our babies in the nursery. They loved our children and our children loved them. They will always have a special place in our hearts for their service, dedication and love. When Mrs. Tillery and Mrs. Belch were forced to resign due to health issues, Clonnie Reynolds and Francis Allen began to keep our nursery. They have continued the tradition of serving our church family with their own dedication and love. They also are very special to us.

A copy machine was purchased in 1988. Clifton Davis, Jr. donated a TV and the trustees gave a VCR. Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Burgess donated a sound system for the hearing impaired.

Our church family was shocked, horrified and saddened to learn of the violent murder of one of our very own. Ralph Bryant, son of Fletcher and Jean Bryant, lost his life on Saturday night, February 21, 1988. Some of us learned of this tragedy before we came to church that next morning. Others learned about it when they entered our church building for Sunday School or Worship Service. Most of us remember the sadness and helpless feelings that we all experienced. We wanted to help the family so badly to cope with their tragedy. We stood by them and prayed diligently for them. Our God took them under his protection and got them through their ordeal as only He can do. As a church family, we became closer as we suffered along with the family.

On February 21, 1988, our son Ralph Bryant was brutally murdered. Our lives were forever changed! I don't know how we would have stood it if it hadn't been for the

support of our church family and friends. For the next eight years our lives were in total chaos. Fletcher had heart surgery two months after Ralph's death. Again our friends came to our rescue. They planted his crop for him. Starting in January, 1989, we went through a four month murder trial. Most every day some of our friends were there to support us. In 1991, Fletcher had a heart attack. From then on until his death in 1996, his health slowly declined. We had two more murder trials because the first one was overturned. It was almost more than we could bear. We only got through it with the help of God and our friends. We felt truly blessed to have such a loving and caring church family.

—Jean Bryant Futrell

One of our current members and her family were looking for a new church family and visited us for the first time that Sunday. God led them here to this place at that particular time. She and her family decided this was where they needed to be because of many things, among which was the love and concern shown by the members and pastor that day.

In April, 1988, pictures were taken for the church's third pictorial directory with 156 families participating, which made it possible to have a hardback cover at no additional cost.

In August, 1988, a baking contest "For Men Only" was held. The winners of the three different categories were J. D. Simmons (Baked from Scratch), Rev. James Hester (Best Ready Made Cake Mix) and Smokie Piland (Looks). Everyone enjoyed cake and ice cream. What fun!

In 1988, our choir members, led by Pam Cox, were Smokey Piland, Lillie Vick, Sadie Bridgers, Mercile Hester, Gail Martin, Clonnie Reynolds, Tina Woodard, Billy Joyner, Johnny Reynolds, Lit Woodard, L.G. Britt, William Johnson, Stewart Woodard, Lawrence Ricks, Tim Vann, Bernard Deloatch, Jimmy Nelson, Marjorie Joyner, Sandra Vann, Thadys Simmons, Willie Mae Johnson, Juanita Britt, Rob Taylor, Pam Woodard and Wanda Taylor.

One of the highlights of 1989 was a special program and reception, held on August 20th and given by the church, honoring Rev. James E. Hester for ten years of service. He was given a love offering. The program began with an invocation by Rev. Gerald Riggs, after which a variety of salutes were given by Rev. Lonnie Armstrong, Baptist Youth, Baptist Women, The James Hester Class, Friends, Trustees and Deacons. The program also included special music provided by Pam Hester Quinn, Rev. and Mrs. Darryll Hester, Men's Quartet, Sanctuary Choir and Pam Cox. Russell Johnson, Jr. closed the program with a benediction.

At this time Paula Barrett was instrumental in organizing the Children's Bible Drill Team and Youth Bible Drill Team. She was assisted by Mary Lou Woodard and Sandy Daughtry. We have been proud each

year to have winners on the local, association and state levels.

Paula Barrett was baptized in our baptistery on September 9, 1963. She joined Galatia Baptist Church but at that time the baptistery at Galatia was cracked. Nine Galatia Baptist members were baptized that afternoon at our church.

One of our note-burning ceremonies was held on January 14, 1990, to celebrate the final payment on our new building. Trustees and deacons gathered around the altar and took part in burning the note. Those participating in the note burning were trustee and deacon members: Mike Belch, David Simmons, Lawrence Ricks, Kelly Vann, Sandra Vann, Fletcher Bryant, James Martin and Dr. Thomas Vinson. The debt on the new building had been paid in less than four years. None of the debt was paid through the church budget. We applied memorial gifts, gifts given in honor and the homecoming offering to the building fund. A picture appeared in the *Biblical Recorder* on March 3, 1990, of the note-burning ceremony. Those pictured were Kelly and Sandra Vann, Fletcher Bryant, Lawrence Ricks, Randolph Burgess, Denny Vann, Rev. James Hester, Mike Belch, James Martin, Dr. Thomas Vinson and Jentry White.

Due to the fact that the church was ahead of budget and the building note had been paid, it was decided to continue the Building Fund and rename it the Building and Renovation Fund.

In 1990, Conway Baptist Church established endowment scholarships at Chowan College and Campbell University. The amount of \$500.00 is given each year per college not to exceed \$10,000.00. The Chowan College scholarship is entitled The Conway Baptist Church Scholarship Fund. The members of Conway Baptist Church were interested in higher education and were delighted to support the good work Chowan College and Campbell University are doing, not only locally, but nationally and internationally, as well. The purpose of the scholarship fund is to assist young men and women enrolled at Chowan and Campbell with preference given to young people from (1) Conway Baptist Church, (2) the town of Conway, and (3) the West Chowan Baptist Association.

The Puppet Ministry was begun in 1990 with its inspiring messages in music and drama. Twyla Duke and Gurney Burgess, III lead the group and use their talents to bless the children and adults almost every Sunday. Their messages touch the hearts of all who listen. One of the favorites is the "Laughing Song," which is sure to put a smile on each face.

"One Sunday morning in the James Hester Sunday School Class, Rev. Hester, our Sunday School teacher and preacher, announced that the church had purchased a set

of four puppets along with some puppet programs. He told us that he would like to have something for the children on Sunday mornings before the main service and wanted to know if we knew of anyone who would like to volunteer or if any of us would like to volunteer to head up a puppet team. Still being fairly new to Conway Baptist Church, I was a little shy and did not speak up in class. After class I stopped Mr. Hester and told him I would like to help. Thus began the Conway Baptist Puppet Group with four puppets, and myself, Emily Taylor, Melanie Cox and Valerie Barrett as puppeteers.

We grew and others joined us, Gurney Burgess, Emily Barrett, Aaron Woodard, Ashley Duke, Jennifer Richey and Curtis Knight. When these puppeteers grew up and moved on to college or marriage, Gurney and I were left to carry on. We have grown again with the help of Jason and Stephen Umphlett, Jeanene Carpenter, David and Joe Brown and their mom, Rhonda. We have also on occasion recruited volunteers who are not regular puppet team members to help us out by talking and singing with the puppets or doing the voice of a puppet.

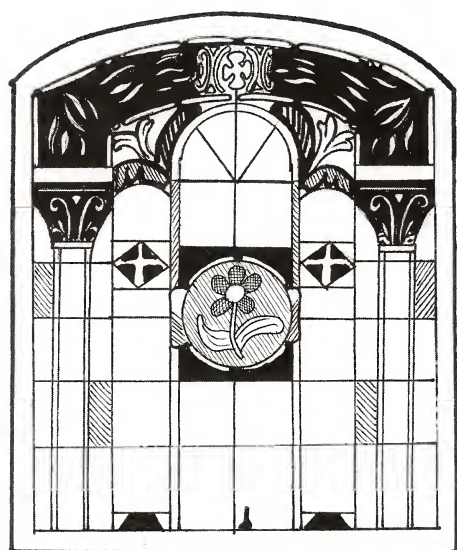
We perform for the children every Sunday morning with a Christian message. We have performed for other churches, school festivals and fall festivals as well, spreading the good news of Christ to children and adults alike.” —Twyla Duke

But Jesus called the children to him and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” (Luke 18:16-17)

Madie Alice Sumner Draper wrote, “I joined Conway Baptist Church in 1939 and was baptized soon after. I was married by Rev. Lonnie Sasser to Hiram Draper, Jr., and having been brought up to believe that the husband is the head of the household, went to his church and joined Conway Methodist Church and stayed there for 32 years. Hiram became ill with arthritis overnight. We both had a hard time accepting this and did not have a minister that met our needs. We visited Conway Baptist Church and found friends that we related with and joined this church and we both were baptized in 1983. I know we both became better people because of this move and have said many times that it was the best thing we ever did.

Our church is like a beautiful tapestry made up of many people, with diverse gifts, woven together making a priceless work of art. As the scarlet cord flows in the Bible through the Old Testament and the New Testament, so the scarlet thread weaves through the tapestry of Conway Baptist Church, binding us together.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)



Flowering Pomegranate

Chapter 10

OUR ONLY

HOPE

1990 – 1994

At this time personal computers and the internet came on the scene to connect ordinary citizens to information around the world. During the first half of the 90's, our soldiers went to Saudi Arabia in Operation Desert Shield. Allied forces launched an attack on Iraq in Operation Desert Storm. For the first time in history, thanks to CNN, we actually saw the battles being fought. In 1993, seventy people died with David Koresh in Waco, Texas. Also in that year, six people were killed and over 1000 injured in the bomb attack of New York's World Trade Center Twin Towers by Islamic radicals. On April 19, 1995, (the second anniversary of the Waco event), a truck bomb exploded in the Federal Building in Oklahoma City killing 168 people. Pictures of the scene were broadcast over the internet within minutes. As we look back at the terrible events that seem to be escalating, we see that the world needs us (the church) and our message of the hope and saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only hope in a desperate world.

Realizing the need for our church to be protected, Rev. Hester negotiated the drafting of the Articles of Incorporation. On September 9, 1990, they were adopted by the church. Members of the board of deacons,

board of trustees and the pastor would compose the board of directors for the incorporated church. Rev. Hester gave special thanks to Russell H. Johnson, Jr. for his efforts in writing the Articles of Incorporation. He noted that it served as a model throughout the association.

During that same year lighting was improved outside the church. Vinyl and aluminum siding was installed on the outside woodwork of the parsonage and garage. A new furnace was purchased for the parsonage, and a new baptistery was installed in the church. Hymnals were also purchased through donations and first used on April 19, 1991.

The next year the outside of the church and one classroom were painted. Sheet-rock and wiring were installed on the second floor over the fellowship hall, a new sound system was installed in the sanctuary, new handbell tables and a new podium were purchased. Shrubbery around the church was replaced and rocks were added in the beds.

Over the years the trustees and Rev. Hester had many problems and situations to deal with. One year they found that a squirrel was getting into the church attic and had actually chewed a hole in the sanctuary ceiling over the organ. When the squirrel came out of the church, the entry hole was patched so he could not get back into the church and then the ceiling was repaired.

Another unusual situation occurred when our old heater developed a leak. The only solution was to replace the boiler. But until the unit could be replaced, temporary repairs were needed. The problem was to stop the leak. Mike actually built a dam in the furnace room to catch the water from the leak. Rev. Hester and Trustee Chairman, Mike Belch, reported that it took fifteen bags of meal, put in the boiler, to stop the leak. When the furnace was replaced, sledge hammers had to be used to break up the large boiler into smaller pieces that could be removed from the furnace room.

The church body decided at its January 12, 1992, conference to observe Homecoming every three years rather than every year as had been the custom for some years. The second Sunday in November was designated as the annual "Harvest Day" for a special offering to go to the Building/Renovation Fund.

Two concerns were evident at a business meeting in 1992. Sunday School director Johnny Reynolds was concerned with the drop in attendance not only in the summer months but also in the winter months. The second concern expressed was "how can we best give our young people guidance?" At that time our young people numbered 45. A part-time youth director was recommended at that meeting.

A Queen Regent Ceremony was held for the Acteens in 1992. Those who were honored in this ceremony were Audry Curlings, Dawn

Martin, Melanie Cox, Marianna Barrett, Emily Taylor and Valerie Barrett. Leaders were Paula Barrett, Jackie Duncan and Sandy Daughtry.

In 1992 the Baptist Men of West Chowan Association built and supplied a disaster relief trailer. Our church helped by donating money for this project.

Our church contributed \$34,111.00 to missions in 1992. In December the church family again participated in a mission action project, taking the opportunity to share the love of God at Christmas time with children who were victimized by hurricane Andrew. Each child received three dozen cookies and a toy.

Because the handbells were twenty-two years old and in need of repair, they were refurbished at a cost of \$1,700.00 and mallets were purchased. The refurbished bells were guaranteed for life.

Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood died in 1992 at age 91. Her funeral was an event of wonderful music played by some of her students, memories given by her pastor, Rev. Hester, and her former student, Rev. Keith Vaughan, and attended by her family, students and many friends. She planned her own funeral and it was carried out per her instructions. A memorial fund to purchase carillons was established in memory of Mrs. Fleetwood. The carillon fund was completed in January, 1994, and the chimes were bought and installed. The computerized carillons are located in the balcony with speakers in the steeple of the church. They are programmed to play beautiful music over the speakers each day. Each time they are played, they remind the hearers of the message in this verse: **For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.** (John 3:16)

The congregation was delighted when Rev. and Mrs. Hester decided to retire in Conway. They moved into their new home located on Lake Deberry Road in November, 1992, thus leaving the parsonage empty. We are happy to have them as permanent residents.

To minister to the senior citizens of our church, Rev. Hester instigated the organization of the Sonshine Club, which was formed for 87 senior members in 1993. Their activities have included dinners, trips, fun and fellowship that have enriched the lives of this group. Rev. Hester, James Martin and Ed Rawls often drove the bus for their outings including plays, musicals, picnics and shopping trips. On one June day they took a riverboat cruise on *Annabelle Lee*. The Sonshine Club's outings also included a trip to the Pottery and Shopping Center in Selma, an outing at Lake Gaston including lunch, boating, horseshoes, fishing and fellowship, a trip to Williamsburg for the Country Music Christmas Show and a Mud Cats

ball game in Zebulon. Anne White was the leader of this group.

Our WMU received the Distinguished Award for 1992 from North Carolina WMU. Rev. Lonnie Armstrong, Director of Missions for West Chowan Baptist Association, announced his retirement and a love offering was collected for him. Also at this time a new singles class was begun.

In January, 1994, Rev. Hester began and led a "First Place" weight loss program. The theory of this Christ-centered health program was to apply weight-loss guidelines derived from scriptures relating to caring for the body. The program was a thirteen-week session of instruction and support. Approximately a dozen people in the first group succeeded in practicing healthier lifestyles. Several "First Place" classes followed, enabling many to share in the weight-loss program.

In April, 1994, a Dell computer was given to the church office to aid in the keeping of financial records and membership records, and for the preparation of printed materials. This was a giant step into the computer age and proved to be an asset in the daily operations of the church office.

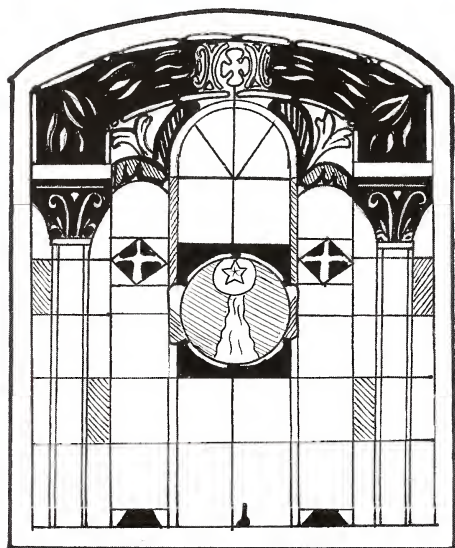
The Nellie Deloatch Group sold Christmas Cards as a fundraising project. The front of the cards pictured our sanctuary decorated for the Christmas season. Money earned from this project was used to purchase an ice maker for our kitchen. The group also began a tradition of placing carnations in memory and in honor of loved ones in the sanctuary on Mother's Day and Father's Day.

Our lives are like a puzzle, put together piece by piece. It is impossible to see the completed puzzle picture as we are progressing in time. As we become older and look back, we can see a pattern forming. One glorious day we will see the completed picture of our life when each of us stands before Him. The puzzle pieces will fit perfectly into place and the cracks and lines around each piece will disappear into perfection. The same is true of our church. In pausing to look back at our history, we can see a pattern forming but we cannot now see the completed picture. We know that we will see it clearly when the church is completed (when Jesus comes back for His church). Our task is to trust God as the pieces of the puzzle of our lives and our church are put into place by Him.

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

(1 Corinthians 13:12 KJV)

I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel. (Numbers 24:17)



Star

Chapter 11

A DREAM

COME TRUE

1995 - 1999

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.” (Matthew 2:1-2)

Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory. (1Timothy 3:16)

In 1999, two Columbine High School Students killed fifteen, including themselves. One of the victims, when asked if she believed in Jesus, answered “Yes,” and immediately lost her life. As tragic as her death was, she stood firm in her faith of her Lord. She is now wearing the martyr’s crown of reward. May each of us, if faced with a similar situation, stand firm for our Lord even if the cost is our lives.

For years the installation of an elevator here in our own church was a dream of many members. The church body, encouraged by Rev. Hester, again acted in faith to make that dream a reality. The need for an elevator and discussions about the possibility began as early as 1968 and in April, 1980, an elevator fund was begun. Finally, in 1993, a design was drawn and an elevator bid of approximately \$80,000 was accepted.

The year of 1995 began with a flurry of activity. Ground was broken in July to begin building the long-awaited elevator, which was to be placed at the back of the church. It would prove to be easily accessible and would have handicap parking nearby. Mike Belch, Lawrence Ricks and Donnie Martin were members of the elevator building committee. It was noted that chairman, Mike Belch, was on the job site nearly every day during construction.

When the new elevator was placed into service, it was one of the first of its size by the Otis Company. The elevator is powered by two pistons located on the sides of the elevator, powered by hydraulic fluid pumped by a 25-horse-power pump located in the equipment room. The elevator has numerous safety devices for the protection of the passengers. Several of the engineers from Bloomington, Indiana, visited the site in order to watch the elevator being assembled. The engineers related that this was the first elevator of its design to be installed in the country and was one of the largest passenger elevators they made at that time. The long-awaited elevator was completed in the summer of 1995 at a cost of \$87,855.00. Money for this project came from gifts, memorials and fund-raising suppers. Our much-used chair lift was sold. It had given many riders an opportunity to join in our worship services and activities, which would have been impossible without it. The chair lift had served us well.

Elevator plans were well underway. Lawrence Ricks and Mike Belch, trustees, worried that an oversized coffin might not "make the turn" out of the elevator into the hall on the second floor. Mike said that they were really in a panic over this. Plans had been made and it was mighty late to have to change the design. They met with the job foreman of C.D. Williams, contractor, George Pope (architect) and Rev. Hester. They decided that the best thing to do was to cut a piece of plywood the size of an oversized coffin. They actually called around to the funeral homes to determine the correct dimensions. Then, with a sheet of plywood cut to size, they practiced to see if the coffin would make the turn from the elevator into the hall. Boy, was it close! Mike reported that the corner of the plywood (coffin) would swing into the windowsill and just would make the turn. The elevator project could proceed as planned!

On October 8, 1995, we held our 90th anniversary celebration. The elevator was dedicated at that service. George Pope (architect) and C. D. Williams' foreman were present and thanked by trustee chairman, Mike Belch. Rev. Donald J. Dunlap, our first full-time pastor was welcomed and gave a short greeting. Jean Ricks gave a report from the history committee. Mrs. Alice Woodard wrote the 90th history and copies were available to all. Everyone was encouraged to visit the history room. Rev. Hester delivered the message. Following the invitation hymn and the blessing,

members gathered around the elevator for the ribbon cutting ceremony. Mrs. Ella Mae Futrell and Mr. Lloyd Futrell cut the ribbon for the new elevator. They, along with Mrs. Gertie Britt, were the first ones to ride the elevator. What a joy it was to see them using the elevator, which will carry up to 28 people at a time. The elevator was dedicated to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Following the ceremony a bountiful dinner on the grounds was served to all.

Pictures were taken for our fourth directory and were distributed in August, 1995.

The Woman's Missionary Union underwent a name change becoming Women on Mission. Showing that they were true to their name, our WMU gave a donation to the flood victims in Severn where homes were flooded and families lost everything. The BYW group sold commemorative plates as a fundraiser.

A Winter Celebration was observed at the culmination of the Sunday School Attendance Contest in February under the direction of Phillip Ricks, Sunday School Director. The purpose of this Winter Carnival was for participants to join in the fun without involving money. Tickets for cakewalks, prizes and games were earned by attending Sunday school, bringing a Bible to Sunday school, studying the lesson, attending preaching or bringing a visitor. Among the festivities were bingo, cake walks, toy walks, fishing, golf, bobbing for apples, face painting and ring toss. A hot dog supper was served to all. Everyone had a wonderful time.

Mr. Russell Leake, a Gideon and Principal of Jackson Eastside Elementary School, spoke to us in July on the work that is being done by the Gideons in placing Bibles in many hands. (Phillip Ricks is also a member of this dedicated organization.) A Gideon speaker has come to share his testimonies with us almost every year. An offering is taken at the close of the service for the Gideons to use in their work. Only God knows the impact of those Bibles that have been purchased with our offerings and placed in the hands of a desperate person in need of Jesus Christ.

In April Rev. Hester was congratulated on being elected Moderator of the West Chowan Association.

Conway experienced a terrible hail and wind storm on July 3, 1996. This storm occurred just prior to the funeral of Lee Duncan, beloved church member and teacher of the Agape Class, who lost his battle with cancer. Most of the funeral attendees were in the church waiting for the family to come in. The family members had arrived at the church and were in their vehicles on the church parking lot when the storm hit. Those in the church could hear the terrible sound of large hail stones hitting the roof.

After the funeral was over, those exiting the church had an eerie feeling as they looked around to see trees blown down and damage done to property in our area. The cotton crop sustained major hail damage from that storm.

The Agape Class changed their name to the Lee Duncan Class in honor and memory of Lee.

Jackie Duncan Hardy wrote.....“When the position (of church secretary) became vacant again the church was gracious enough to hire me to serve the church again, this time under Rev. James Hester. I worked in this position for many years....until my life as I knew it changed due to the death of my husband, Lee Duncan. Conway Baptist stood by us through the time of illness and after his passing. My family and I will be forever grateful for all the love shown us. (That is one thing that is so special about this church.) My husband and I taught a Sunday School class for adults. That class has continued to grow and has honored his memory by naming the class – the Lee Duncan Class.

After I remarried and moved to Scotland Neck, I also moved my membership to the church at which my husband is a member. My membership may not be here, but Conway Baptist has been a part of my life as long as I can remember, and it is still a part of my life. It is “my church.” Now, my daughter, her husband and my grandchildren worship with you here at Conway Baptist.

Your witness is still strong. Things may not be done the same as they were in the “good ole days,” but you are still sharing the Lord in this community and world wide through your mission gifts. I continue to serve in Baptist churches (65 to be exact) in my position as Associational Secretary for the North Roanoke Baptist Association in Rocky Mount. My heart still remains with Conway Baptist.”

Jackie Duncan Hardy resigned as our secretary June 6, 1997, having served faithfully, gracefully and efficiently since April, 1983.

Rev. James E. Hester announced his retirement effective January 1, 1997. From 1979 until his retirement in 1997, Rev. Hester proved to be an excellent administrator, counselor and friend. He faithfully visited those in the hospitals and the shut-ins. His sermons were evangelistic and timely. A sense of humor served him well with his friends and congregation. He displayed a fervent desire to win souls to Christ and to meet the needs of his church family. Rev. Hester had preached the funerals of 147 church members during his seventeen-year ministry here. In addition to those were the many funerals of non-members that he preached! A retirement party for Rev. and Mrs. Hester was held January 26, 1997.

During this time, a farm was left jointly to our church and Bethany Methodist Church in Milwaukee by Abner Lassiter. In his estate, Abner Lassiter in 1997 continued the generosity shown to our church in 1905 by his grandfather, Abner Lassiter, who donated the land on which the first church was built.

Dianna Sumner felt the call to missions and on July 3, 1997, she

went to El Salvador to help in the construction of the Shalom Orphanage.

Rev. Tom Caulkins became our interim pastor in August, 1997. He and his wife grew to be very special to us. It is written in our December '97 newsletter, "Rev. Thomas H. Caulkins and his lovely wife, Ann, have been with us since September. Mr. Caulkins is serving us well as interim. We have truly grown close to this wonderful couple in the brief time they have been with us."

The note-burning ceremony for the elevator note was held following the worship service on December 7, 1997, just two years after the construction began.

At this time the Sunday School year was changed to begin in September rather than October.

One of our former pastors, Rev. Donald Dunlap, preached our revival in March, 1998.

Rev. Willie A. McLawhorn (1998)

After a lengthy search, the pulpit committee recommended on February 8, 1998, that Rev. Willie A. McLawhorn become our new pastor. The vote was unanimous. Rev. McLawhorn, his wife (Diane) and children (Will and Melanie) moved to Conway on April 1, 1998, and he began serving the Lord in our midst. He continues to serve today and has led us into the new millennium. Rev. McLawhorn is evangelistic in his preaching, well-read, knowledgeable and supportive in working with the members of the church. He has proven to be versatile as well. He has performed in the youth productions, sometimes acting as comedian. He has also served as a Santa Claus. Throughout his ministry he has laughed and celebrated with God's people in happy times and cried with them in times of sorrow. He feels that one of his gifts is ministering to people in crisis. He counts it a blessing to have served only three churches in his ministry. He gives God all of the praise for choosing him, not only for salvation, but to be a shepherd of His flock.

Gail Martin was honored and given a certificate of appreciation for 20 years of service to the Children's Choir on July, 12, 1998. She and her husband, Donnie, moved to South Boston, Virginia, and have been sorely missed. Gail's dedication will be remembered by both parents and children. One example of her commitment was shown by her action of picking up a car load of children on choir days as she made her way to the church. Gail was a faithful choir member from childhood. She was also a member of our Handbell Choir and Handbell quartet. She left us with an ache in our hearts. We still miss her to this day, but we know that God is

using her in her new church.

Gail Martin also served for a year as part-time church secretary. Upon her resignation, Pearl Brown was hired as secretary. She has proved to be efficient, reliable and a friend to all.

The WMU, led by Madie Alice Draper, collected eyeglasses during the year and delivered them to a missionary who put them to good use. The missionary accepted them the glasses at the WMU convention.

Youth leader Debbie Vinson reported at a business meeting in 1999 that the Older Youth Group sponsored a float in the Conway Christmas Parade, which has since become a tradition for them. They also enjoyed a cook-out for their Christmas party. In June, a donation fund- raiser was held for the Youth Group to fund their first trip to Caswell.

In March, 1999, the Youth sponsored a Sweetheart dinner theatre and held our second Womanless Wedding. The next year, in March, the Youth Group began what would become a tradition, major production and fund raiser for them. Their first production was CBC Love Boat with a supper and performance by Kids 4 Christ and Conway Baptist Youth held in our fellowship hall. The event was enjoyed by all and netted them nearly \$1,000. They donated \$500.00 to the church van fund and used the remainder for summer camp trips. This fundraiser and production was the beginning of very impressive annual productions that eventually were moved from our fellowship hall to the gym at Conway Middle School due to the large number of guests. The productions include dinner, cooked by volunteers and served by our youth, and a show that always has a Christian theme. These shows involve the youth of our church as well as a few other youth from our area. The sell-out crowd is wowed each year by our youth. The gospel is presented in these programs to a large group of people from our area. The themes have been CBC Love Boat, A Night of Stars, Flashback-Where Were You?, Gone Country and The Spotlight. In keeping with our centennial year, the March, 2005, theme was Centimental Journey including various numbers depicting different decades from 1905 to 2005.

Under the capable leadership of Thomas and Debbie Vinson, Skip and Diana Richey, Brian and Christy Bolton, Phillip and Cindy Ricks, Pete and Susan Umphlett and Albert and Margaret Vann, and with the encouragement of Rev. McLawhorn, the youth ministry has grown. Our youth have gone to camp almost every year at Caswell or Ridgecrest.

Debbie Vinson recalls that the new Youth Group was formed in 1998 during the time that Rev. Caulkins served as our interim pastor. Debbie felt led by God to get more

involved with the youth. Debbie, along with her husband, Thomas, and Skip and Diana Richey, began to lead the Older Youth Group. Now they have three groups, the Older Youth Group, FROGS (Fully relying on God's Salvation) led by Phillip and Cindy Ricks and Brian and Christy Bolton, and Kids For Christ, led by Pete and Susan Umphlett and Albert and Margaret Vann. Debbie gives all of the credit to God for the successes of the fundraising youth productions. So many obstacles melt away!

Ever mindful of the needs of others across the area, nation and world, our church gave \$500.00 to help the victims of Hurricane Mitch in South America. The WMU also gave care packages for Chowan students.

It is a blessing to us when our church is remembered in a will or estate. At this time two estate gifts were received.

On September 16, 1999, we experienced a disaster in our area in the form of hurricane Floyd. The major damage from this storm occurred from the rising water. During the month before the hurricane, we experienced a large amount of rain. When hurricane Floyd struck, it poured more rain onto the soggy ground causing creeks, rivers and ponds to overflow their banks. Most area bridges were underwater and impassable and wherever there was a creek, the area was flooded. Some people were stranded, some lost their homes. Our church collected an offering of \$2,595.00 for the hurricane victims, along with two truckloads of clothes and food. Our association gave \$3,000.00 to our church for damages. We felt that we had been blessed receiving only minor damage to our church from this storm so we gave our share of the money to Edgewood and Elm Grove churches in Windsor. Those churches lost everything as a result of the storm.

To honor Dr. J. A. Fleetwood, Jr., the Town of Conway hosted a reception on Sunday, September 19, 1999, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Conway Middle School with an attendance of over 500 friends, family and colleagues. Dr. Joe was honored for his service to mankind as a caring and dedicated country doctor. During the reception the establishment of the Dr. Joseph A. Fleetwood, Jr. Scholarship Fund was announced. Over the span of his career, Dr. Fleetwood had delivered over 3,000 babies! Appropriate pink and blue "Dr. Joe's Kids" nametags were worn by all of his "babies." We are proud to claim Dr. Joe as one of our own!

Those who have served on the board of trustees can attest to the fact that sometimes they have to deal with all sorts of unusual problems and situations. One of those times occurred in 1999. It was discovered that honey bees had made a beehive in the columns at the front of the church. The bees had to be removed and the columns replaced.

Among the other projects during the year were replacing the carpet

in the sanctuary, upgrading the parking lot and establishing a van fund.

Our oldest member, Mrs. Patty Barnes, turned 100 on November 2, 1999. Mrs. Patty passed away on September 7, 2004, at the age of 104. She will be remembered by all as a kind, lovely person. This appeared in her obituary: "She moved softly upon the earth. She did justly, loved mercy and walked humbly with her Lord. To God be the glory for the great things He hath done."

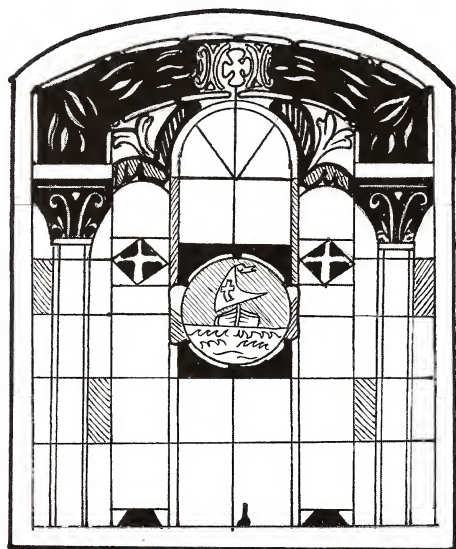
In December an open house was held by Rev. and Mrs. McLawhorn at the parsonage. It was a time of fun as friends came by for fellowship and refreshments!

Two statements remind us to stay fully grounded today but to keep our eyes on our eternal future. First, Rev. Hester's timely sermon, delivered at our 90th anniversary service, encouraged us to refrain from living in the past. For a church to get moving, it takes a commitment to our Lord Jesus Christ. We do not know what the future holds for us, but we do know that Jesus is coming back for us. Our future is in His hands! Second are these words of Alice Woodard in her 1995 history: "The church's challenge for the future is to live each and every day so that others may come to know Jesus as Lord and Savior, and to grow more spiritually mature by following Him more closely."

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. (1 John 1:7)

A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

(Mark 4:37-41)



Ship

Chapter 12

THE NEW

MILLENNIUM

2000 - 2004

By this time it seemed that everything was computerized. As we approached the year 2000, there was real concern and uneasiness. Computers had been programmed to handle the dates of the year with the two digit rather than the four digit number. When 1999 (or 99) rolled into 2000 what would happen? Much time, effort and money were spent in anticipation of the transition. As it turned out, there were few or no glitches thanks to the massive efforts of many people.

On September 11, 2001, terrorists took control of four airplanes and flew two of these planes into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, N. Y., killing all on board the planes and over three thousand people trapped in the buildings. A third plane flew into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and the fourth plane crashed in a field in Pennsylvania, failing to hit its intended target due to the bravery of the passengers. Our nation was stunned and horrified by the event. Many people

our nation turned to their houses of worship and it seemed that for a time the whole nation was turning to God. Soon after the 9/11 disaster the country, under the leadership of George W. Bush, was plunged into the midst of the war with Iraq, leading to the eventual capture of Saddam Hussein.

On December 26, 2004, an earthquake west of the Indonesian island of Sumatra caused a Tsunami that killed nearly 300,000 people. The quake measured 9.0 on the Richter scale, making it the largest quake worldwide in four decades.

Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. (Matthew 24:7-8)

The congregation, led by our trustees and encouraged by our pastor, felt that we needed a church van to be used by many groups including the youth. In anticipation of this it was decided to sell our bus. The bus was sold to a church that used it for a "traveling" vacation Bible school. In April, 2000, the decision was made to purchase a van. Later in the year, realizing the need, the church purchased a second van. These vans have been used to carry members of our church many miles and many places. People up and down the highway see the vans and know that we are on a mission for the Lord. Conway Baptist Church appears on both sides of our two vans.

Phillip Ricks, led by the Holy Spirit, resigned his duties as Sunday School Director. He was to put his efforts into a new Sunday school class for young couples and young adults. The members decided to name it, the Phillip Ricks Class. It has filled a need in our church and also has provided a blessing for many. The class has grown and is busy doing the work of the Lord. It was noted in a business meeting in July, 2000, that the class was growing so fast they would soon need a larger classroom!

In September, 2000, the Circle of Faith group was formed. Jean Ricks, member of the Nellie Deloatch Group and current WMU director for our association, identified the need for a new group due to the increased number of young members in our church. She expressed this need to Emily Jenkins, who in turn called several people, and their first meeting was held with ten members. The group has grown to twenty-four members from our church and other churches. They enjoy their meetings, which are filled with fellowship and, most importantly, they are carrying out the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

During the year additional projects included paving and landscap-

ing of the new parking lot behind the church, replacing the sidewalks all around the church and installing a railing in the balcony. Storm doors were installed at the front doors of the church, given by Jean Bryant Futrell in memory of Fletcher Bryant and Ralph Bryant.

Our church family and WMU participate each year in the Association's Toy Store. The first Toy Store was held in 2000 and has been an annual event ever since. Toys are collected and donated to the project for needy children. West Chowan Association invites these families to "shop" for their children one Saturday before Christmas. The families purchase the gifts, which are categorized by age and gender, for 1/10th of the cost of the gifts. Several of our WMU ladies and Rev. McLawhorn have helped out at the Toy Store by being baggers, shoppers, counselors and cashiers. This has been a great ministry for our association. Each family hears the gospel that day. Each participant receives a blessing, including the workers who find that it is truly more blessed to give than to receive.

In January, 2001, we began to celebrate each fifth Sunday as Praise Sunday. In these services we raise our voices in song to praise the Lord.

In February, 2001, during WMU Focus Week, Mary Carr, a volunteer missionary with Graffitti House in New York City, was our guest speaker. A salad luncheon was served after our worship service to give everyone an opportunity to speak with Mary about her work. The church began financially helping her in July, 2000. An amount to help Mary with her living expenses was put into the 2000-2001 budget.

Later that year the WMU began collecting Vacation Bible School literature to be sent to Mary Carr for use at Graffitti House. For some time the Sunday School literature has been sent to Pilgrim Tract Society.

At this time our church was recognized as being one of the top ten churches in giving to the N. C. Baptist Convention.

Several men from our church attended Promise Keepers, which has proved to be very inspirational and has become an annual event. The men who attend find they don't want to miss the Promise Keepers' meetings, and they encourage others to join them.

Children's Church began with Kelli Garris as director. Linda Knight eventually accepted the responsibility as director.

On March 10, 2001, Nina Mae Woodard Ricks was honored on her 100th birthday by a party given by her grandchildren in our fellowship hall. Over 250 loved ones were in attendance. Great fun was had by all, especially Nina Mae! At this time she has become our oldest member as she turned age 104 on March 10, 2005.

During the week of March 11, 2001, we held an On Missions

Celebration. We were blessed to hear from five missionaries. That year our missionary speakers were Sam Stallings, Velma Ferrell, Kenneth Heath, Joe Dobbs and Harry Byrd. Since that time, missionaries Joe Dobb and his wife returned to our area and spoke at Rich Square Baptist Church. Our choir traveled to Rich Square and sang at this service. It is so inspirational to hear from our missionaries who are dedicated to the Lord and allow Him to use them wherever He leads.

The Circle of Faith began taking orders in 2001 for Easter roses as one of their fund raising projects. Long stem yellow, pink or white roses are placed in honor or memory of loved ones. Containers of beautiful roses have graced our sanctuary every Easter since then.

On April 21, 2001, the Friendly Group hosted its first fashion show and luncheon. About ninety style-conscious ladies filled the fellowship hall and received a first-hand look at the new spring fashions presented by Linda Parker (Parkers Two). Good food, fun, entertainment and fellowship were enjoyed by all. The Fashion Show and Luncheon has become an annual event for this WMU group. The themes have been Fashion Forward, Spring Fling, Oh, You Beautiful Doll, Garden Party and Putting on the Ritz. The Quality Shop of Roanoke Rapids has presented the fashions for the last two years. This group finds that they get better and better each year at working together. The money from the project is used for missions.

Our April 22nd worship service was led by children from the Baptist Children's Homes in Kinston and Thomasville.

Each year revival services are held in March or April. The deacons lead the church in holding these services up to God in prayer. The choir begins working hard early in the year to prepare revival music. The speakers always are motivational and inspirational. On the last night of revival, a church wide barbecue supper is usually prepared by Kelly Vann and friends. The food is delicious and attendance is good! It has also become a tradition of the past few years to have a concert on that night. Most years the concert includes our own "Heirs to the Kingdom." Among the others who have shared their talents are the Children's Choir, Handbell Choirs, Twyla Duke, Pam Cox, Bennie and Paula Barrett, Arielle Ricks, Jennifer Richey, Erosto Beard, and Rhonda Brown. During our revival, a van was used by Carroll Futrell to aid those who could not drive at night who were delivered safely to and from the church services.

On June 9, 2001, a 25th Wedding Anniversary reception was given to Rev. Willie and Diane McLawhorn by friends and family in the Fellowship Hall from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Many came by to give best wish-

es to their pastor and his wife.

On the night of September 11, 2001, following the terrorist attack on our nation, our church held a called prayer meeting. Those attending gathered to pray for the families who lost loved ones and for God's protection and guidance for our country. North Carolina Baptists responded as a result of the attacks. Our Relief Feeding Unit #1 with thirty volunteers was sent to Washington, D. C., to prepare and serve food for the needy and the relief workers. Two large shower units were sent to New York City. (Our State Missions Offering supports our food and shower vans.) Offerings were also given.

Below is a comic strip by Gurney O. Burgess, III that was printed in our



local paper following the 9/11 attack.

Appearing on bulletin cover on Sunday, September 30, 2001, was a very moving sketch by an unknown young artist depicting souls, from the World Trade Center Twin Towers, rising to the open arms of Jesus .

On October 16, 2001, the pastors of West Chowan Baptist Association met at Conway Baptist Church. It was a powerful meeting reflecting on the events that had occurred in our country the prior month. It is reported that all pastors in attendance came to the front of the church and knelt at the altar in rededication and re-commitment to the Lord.

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14 KJV)

For several years the Sojourners have held a concert in our church to benefit the American Cancer Society Relay For Life. Phillip Ricks sang bass in the group for several years. These song services have been enjoyed by all, and the Sojourners have raised sizable donations.

Our average Sunday School attendance in 2001 was 155. Rev. McLawhorn promised to sing a solo if we reached 200 in Sunday School and on December 23, 2001, we surpassed that number and were rewarded with his fabulous solo!

In January, 2002, Myrld Woodard gave lights that were installed near the front steps in memory of her beloved husband, Kenneth, who lost his life in a pedestrian auto accident.

During one Sunday in February, 2002, the WMU was in charge of the service. A representative from each group including the Mission Friends told about their group and their mission activities.

We have so many people ministering in our church. It is impossible to name each one. Our members see a project that needs doing and they do it. Our WMU ladies and Brotherhood men perform so many tasks that their activities alone would fill a book. Our trustees keep our church in mint condition year after year. Our deacon ministry extends to our church families and others in their times of sorrows and joys.

Sandra Vann, chairperson of the trustees, included the following in her report at a business meeting, "Spiritually, we have been busy, too! The On Mission Celebration and revival were great and VBS was larger and better than ever. Our youth experienced 'mountain-top' adventures at Ridgecrest this summer and there have been baptisms and letter transfers. Truly this year has been filled with God's blessings as His church has reached out to others and has grown."

Our church collected canned goods with a quarter taped to each to refurbish the food pantries in Bertie, Hertford and Northampton counties.

On April 14, 2002, Dana Hall wanted to join our church. She gave her heart to the Lord but was unable to be baptized due to her health. The church voted to accept her without water baptism knowing that she had been baptized by the Holy Spirit.

Our glorious Easter celebrations begin in the early morning with the Sunrise Service which is held alternately at our church and Conway

Methodist Church. Roberts Chapel joined us in the rotation in 2000. Our Easter services are always inspirational. Some years we have included cantatas, baptismal and communion services. The church is always decorated beautifully. An Easter Cantata was performed at the morning worship service in 2002 by the Sanctuary Choir. Through song and narration, the audience could see Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, witness the tender moments in the Upper Room, catch a glimpse of the cross and behold the empty tomb. We feel a renewed joy at Easter as we ponder on the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus and his promise of eternal life to those who believe on him.

A service honoring our graduates is traditionally held each year in May. Graduates who were honored on May 19, 2002, were Ashley Britt, Allison Davis, Curtis Knight, Tony Richey, Zach Vinson, Ben Watson, Joni Woodard and Michael Woodard.

On June 8th, the Circle of Faith sponsored a donation supper for Alan and Michelle Burgess, who sustained tornado damage to their home.

Each quarter the WMU dinner meeting is hosted by one of the groups. In August the meeting was hosted by the Circle of Faith. Angie Brown, a representative of the Pregnancy Crisis Center for Halifax and Northampton Counties, presented an informative program about the center and its outreach in the communities.

On September 11, 2002, a one-year anniversary memorial service was held at Northampton East to remember those who lost their lives in the terrorist attack. Emergency workers, including police, fire and rescue personnel, were also honored. Our choir sang in the mass choir that performed for this service.

On October 6, 2002, a donation supper was sponsored by the Circle of Faith for Jimmy and Karen Nelson, who had lost their home and contents to fire.

On October 16, 2002, Conway Baptist Church, along with Roberts Chapel and Severn Baptist churches, hosted the annual West Chowan Baptist Association meeting in our church. As always a lot of extra time and effort were put into this day to make it as nice as possible. We received many favorable comments and felt that this job was well done!

On Halloween the Kids 4 Christ rode on a hay ride, which they have continued to do in recent years. This event is fun for the kids.

The Circle of Faith revived the Chrismon Tree in December, 2002. They repaired the ornaments made earlier by the Couples Class and also made new ornaments to be used on the tree. They purchased a beautiful

artificial tree that could be used year after year. At the Hanging of the Greens service the members explained the meanings of the different ornaments. The Hanging of the Greens service became an annual tradition beginning in 1999. During that service we decorate our sanctuary and celebrate with beautiful Christmas music. A candlelight service is often included.

In 2002, brothers Jason, Steven and Cody Umphlett received certificates for three years of perfect attendance!

In January, 2003, all four WMU groups raised \$250.00 to purchase one pure water filter for a family of foreign missionaries.

In February, 2003, the Sonshine Club changed its name to Joy Club, which stands for "Just Older Youth." Dianna Sumner leads this group which has enjoyed numerous activities, including shows at Rocky Hock Theater and Lakeland Theater. Several dinners, often funded by private donations, were served at church and enjoyed by members. Special activities usually followed the dinners.

We are so proud each year of our Bible Drill participants. These young people learn where each book of the Bible is located so they can turn to that book in just a few seconds. They also memorize Bible verses and recite them in competition. They participate in local, association, state and national competitions where judges randomly select Bible passages. Drillers have to be very knowledgeable of the subject and must memorize all verses. Each year we have winners that go to the state level of competition from our Bible drill teams. At this time Dianna Sumner leads the Children's Bible Drill and Cindy Ricks leads the Youth Bible Drill. Cherie Jordan has also led the Children's Bible Drillers.

Randall Martin won all the local and state levels, then went on to Atlanta, Georgia, and took the top prize in the National Youth Bible Drill. It was reported, "Martin had a perfect score as the first national SBC Bible drill winner. Randall was calm under pressure and presented an excellent example of properly handling the Bible."

Cindy Ricks wrote, "We have been very blessed to have most of our children and youth win on the state level. Also we have had some of our youth to make it to the Finalist Drill which is the top scorer from each of the state drills. Randall Martin was not only the finalist in the state competition, he was the national winner in Atlanta, Ga., on June 13, 2003. He represented our church very well! We are blessed to have a church that supports our youth in Bible Drill."

For several years artificial flowers were used in the sanctuary. At this time the church began to again use live flowers.

Among the projects during the year were replacing the windows, which had lost their seals, in the office and fellowship hall. The fellowship hall was also painted by the trustees and volunteers.

In September, 2002, the church voted to hire a youth director. A search committee was formed and went to work. On June 22, 2003, George Collins, a Chowan student from Rocky Mount, was hired. A get-to-know-you cook-out was held in honor of George. He began working with our youth and served the Lord here until January 9, 2004. During that time, he and a few friends gave an end-of-the-school-year concert in our sanctuary. This concert was enjoyed by many from our church and area.

For years we have alternated with Conway Methodist Church for our Thanksgiving services, held on the Wednesday night before Thanksgiving. If the service is held at our church, we provide the music and the Methodist minister gives the message. When the service is held in the Methodist church, our pastor gives the message. Roberts Chapel has also joined us in the rotation. We count it an honor and a pleasure to worship with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

The Friendly Group and the Nellie Deloatch Group donated dinnerware, glasses and silverware for use in our kitchen. The old dinnerware and hymnbooks were given to Mt. Carmel Baptist Church.

Over the years we have lost so many of our beloved members. Many left their legacies in our hearts and lives. Mrs. Nannie B. Francis went to be with her Lord on July 18, 2003. Her funeral was one of the most inspirational and uplifting services that many of us have attended. The following poem, written by Mrs. Francis, was read at her funeral.

“He’s Been There All the Time”

Family and friends, you’re not here to say goodbye,
So don’t feel sad, weep or cry.
Today I’m happy as I can be,
Because I’m with Jesus and He is with me.
One day He’ll call you too,
Just as He called me.
There is only one thing I have to say,
Please be ready and don’t delay.
Put all those foolish things aside
And walk with Him side by side.
For that’s one thing sure,
We all must die.

He lifted me up when I was lonely, sick and sad.
He always made me feel so glad
That He was with me through good and bad.
Many nights were long and lonely.
It seemed day would never break.
So I'd put my faith, my all in Him,
For I knew He was no fake.

My eyesight grew far too dim,
But come what may, I just trusted him.
Sin, yes I sinned again and again,
But nothing did I ever gain.
Yet, there He was still loving me,
Sweet, gentle like the falling rain.

Yes, my child you are forgiven,
As long as you believe and have faith in Me.
As long as you are living.
Then when you die, I'll take you home,
To be with Me in Heaven.
Yes, put my bones across the railroad in the clay,
But my soul is with Jesus this very day.

Friends and family, once more I'll say,
There is only one sure way,
And that's through the blood of Jesus
That He shed on the cross.
If you don't believe it, you surely are lost.

So I leave you with this thought in mind.
There is no friend like Jesus you'll ever find.
So put your faith and trust in Him,
And you, too, will meet Him at the end.
I'll be waiting and watching.

—Nannie B. Francis

Our area was in line for a major hurricane, hurricane Isabelle. The storm hit on September 18, 2003. It was a category three hurricane when it hit us and was a slow moving storm that pounded us with winds all day long, with the strongest winds hitting us in the middle of the afternoon. Our area sustained a lot of damage. The roof of our church eventually had to be replaced. The cedar trees in both front corners of the church (in the

flower beds) were twisted and had to be pulled up. Most people were without power for five days. Some were powerless longer than that. We endured days without air-conditioning, electricity, TV and hot water for baths! It made us pause to appreciate our many conveniences! We had to be creative with our cooking and eating. We cooked on grills or we ate cold canned foods. Most people lost the food in their refrigerators and freezers unless they had a generator. We, however, were so blessed by God that no one was injured from this storm. Our damage could have been so much worse as those in other states had experienced that very year. It has been said that this was the worst storm our area had experienced since hurricane Hazel in the middle 50's. Meals from N.C. Baptist Men were prepared and delivered to those needing a hot meal.

On December 1, 2003, A.B. and Ruth Flannagan from Meherrin Baptist Church presented a program for us on a mission trip that they had taken. They were passionate about their experience and encouraged others to take a mission trip. Bobby Taylor felt a call from God that night to go. As things progressed, Bobby went to Quebec, Canada, in April, 2004, with a group of men from our association. They built a storage building for Living Rock Baptist Church. Francois Verschelden is the pastor of this small church. In October, 2004, Francois and his wife, Marie Claude, were able to make the trip to our association and Francois was our guest speaker one Sunday night. He inspired us with his commitment and dedication to the cause of Christ. A fellowship time followed and we enjoyed getting to know them.

In December, 2003, the Circle of Faith delivered Christmas cards. In place of stamps, they asked that the stamp money be given to our Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The cards were sorted and hand delivered, all tied up with a bow, to each recipient. It was a wonderful project and they are to be commended as there was great effort involved in doing this.

In March, 2004, twenty-five men met and decided to form our current brotherhood under the leadership of Bobby Taylor.

In June, 2004, the WMU continued its concern with safe water by helping with the association project of raising money to buy water filters. The project was called "Pure Water, Pure Love." Our church also delivered health kit boxes and \$200.00 in donations to our association for support of the Elliott Project in Iraq. North Carolina Baptists sent 1600 health kit boxes. The association sent 52 and our church sent 24 of the 52! This project honored Larry and Jean Elliott, International Mission Board representatives who, along with several other missionaries, lost their lives on March 15, 2004, in a gunfire attack in Iraq while surveying locations for water purification projects.

During the year a new sound system was installed in the sanctuary. Parts of the old system were used to upgrade the sound system in the fellowship hall. Other projects included renovations made to the parsonage, roof repair done to the fellowship hall and church, breezeway railings replaced, repairs done on the stained glass windows in the steeple and the light replaced in the steeple.

At this time the church roll totaled 412 with 259 enrolled in Sunday School and an average attendance of 139.

In 2004, Christians all over the world anticipated the release of Mel Gibson's movie, *The Passion of the Christ*. It was a powerful film that gave us a visual image of what our Lord experienced in his last hours. We have all read the scriptures and have imagined those scenes as we are reading our Bibles. But actually seeing what Jesus endured touched everyone who saw this movie. Our youth group went together to see it and were moved as were those in our congregation when a few months later, it was shown on our new screen in the sanctuary. Our new video equipment with the retractable screen has been much used and enjoyed by all.

West Chowan Baptist Association purchased their new building from New Hope Baptist Church in 2004. The new Missions Resource Center has already proved to be an asset for our association.

In 2004 Vacation Bible School had an average of 75 children in attendance. The number, including workers, was over 100.

On June 18, 2004, Bennie Edward Pledger at age 79 died in a two-car collision in Columbus County. He was ordained here at Conway Baptist Church and spent his life in the ministry serving the Lord.

Rev. Bennie E. Pledger was one of three ministers ordained by our church. He was born in Northampton County on October 21, 1924, and was the son of Richard and Mamie Pledger. He served as pastor of many churches including Carolina Pines Church in Raleigh, First Church in Ayden, Colerain Church in Colerain, Colony Church in New Bern, New Hope Church in Whiteville and Lennons Crossroads Church in Bladenboro. Rev. Pledger also served his country during World War II as a paratrooper and took part in Operation Market Garden, Battle of the Bulge and the D-day invasion at Normandy.

Mrs. Alice Woodard resigned as our Recording Clerk. She served us well and was recognized with a plaque for 42 years of service.

After the terrorist attack on the New York World Trade Center Twin Towers on 9/11/01, an interest surfaced in many members to study prophecy and the Book of Revelation. Because of the many discussions that were held, this Bible study took us two years to complete (2002- 2004).

The Revelation Bible study led many of us to believe that we are living in the “end times.” Our discussions and brain storming were intriguing, scary and enlightening. It caused us to have a sense of urgency in light of Christ’s return. The Bible tells us that Jesus can come back at any minute. There is nothing that must happen before His return.

During our study, I came to believe that things are “falling” into place for the fulfillment of the “end times prophecies.” I believe that we, as Christ’s church, should be watching and waiting for Christ’s appearing. When that happens we will be raptured in the twinkling of an eye.

End Times Signs include:

1. The re-gathering of the Jews who were scattered in 70 AD and remained scattered until 1948 when God brought the Jewish people back to their ancient land and gave them back Jerusalem in 1967.
2. Increase of travel and knowledge. **Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased.** (Daniel 12:4 KJV)
3. Two witnesses of God will serve during the Tribulation period as prophets, will be killed and their bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem for 3 ½ days. God will then do a mighty miracle by raising these two prophets from the dead and taking them up to heaven *while the whole world is watching*. This is now possible for the first time in history with our news media.
4. Revelation 13 predicts that the Antichrist will control all buying and selling through a mark on the right hand or forehead of each person. Such control was never possible before the invention of laser and computer technology.

The study of Revelation is a key part of the Bible and has been “put aside” for too long. We have nothing to fear because we belong to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. But we need to have a sense of urgency and a desire to be sure our friends and family belong to Jesus. There is coming a day and it may be soon that the very last person will accept Jesus as Lord and Savior and He will come for His bride – the church. When the trumpet sounds, who will be left behind? Have we given our all to reach them? —Wanda Taylor

Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

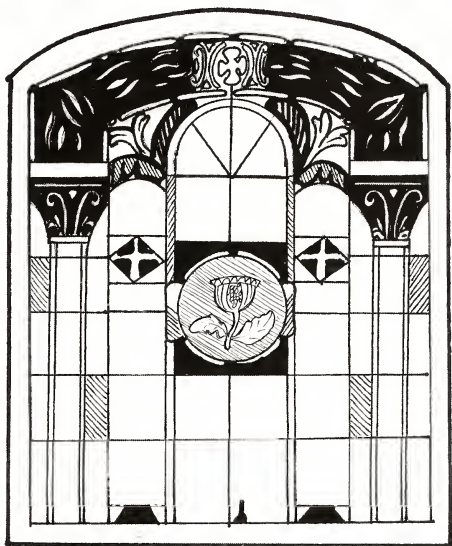
(Philippians 1:6)

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." (John 11:25-26)

Chapter 13

OUR CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

2005



Bursting Pomegranate

I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me: and where I am, my servant also will be. My father will honor the one who serves me. (John 12:24-26)

The Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, the Conway Baptist Church saints, are eagerly awaiting the day when we will celebrate our one hundredth year of the service to the Lord Jesus Christ. During all those years, we, as a Body of Christ, have changed like the changing patterns and colors of a child's kaleidoscope as we have lost faithful members and loved ones that have gone to be with the Lord, as a new baby is born and added into our midst, or as we have sent brides to other churches to serve and as grooms have brought their brides to join us. We have changed over the years in our fashions, our styles of music, our ways of worshiping and our wealth. We are forever changing but the constant with us is the fact that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. We serve and worship the same Lord that our forefathers served and worshiped. In some ways our faith should be stronger than our early members because of the easy access of information that we have at our fingertips to aid in our study.

But we need to be mindful of the many distractions and the pull of the world to keep us from putting Jesus at the top of our priorities. We have a need to slow down, to step back, to reflect on our faith and to regain the passion of our early church leaders and teachers. We will do well to use this special time to deepen our commitment to the Lord and to treasure our place of service in our church here at Conway Baptist Church.

Historical Note: Early in 2005 the Roman Catholic Church and the world were saddened by the death of Pope John Paul II who served for many years as the head of the Roman Catholic Church. His body lay in state for many days in Rome as thousands of people paid their last respects to a man who had given his life in service to God. He was succeeded by Pope Benedict XVI.

As early as 2002, with the formation of the Centennial Committee, centennial plans were begun and a fund was put into place to defray the expenses of our celebration. Those who have served on this committee faithfully, enthusiastically and with great vision are Anne White (chairman), Rev. Willie McLawhorn, Rev. James Hester, Michael Belch, Peggy Davis and Wanda Taylor

The first Centennial Committee meeting was held September 30, 2002. At that meeting a process of "brain storming," planning and working began that will culminate with our Celebration on October 9, 2005. Many projects were planned and at this time many have been completed. Others are well under way as we eagerly approach our one hundredth birthday!

Anne White, chairman of our Centennial Committee, deserves our unmeasured thanks for her vision, work and encouragement. She has kept us on target, worked and spurred us on in our projects. Her goal was to involve as many people as possible in our projects and events so that everyone would have a part in our celebrations. As we move closer to our celebration day, we find the excitement building and we are looking forward to that day with anticipation.

Among the projects was the directory project, coordinated by Debbie Vinson. We wanted to have a directory done during the Centennial year to be kept as a part of our history here at Conway Baptist Church. The sittings and portrait viewings were held in August and September, 2004. Our fifth directory turned out to be wonderful! 136 families posed for pictures. The directories were ready to be passed out in January, 2005. After a few had been distributed, Debbie realized that the binding needed to be redone. She sent the directories back to the company and has since

received them and redistributed them. A big “thank you” goes to Debbie and others who helped with this project that took such tremendous effort!

Another project that was a dream of some of our Centennial Committee members was the quilt project. Josephine Ricks was put in charge of this project. She was uneasy about the project and spent a lot of time talking with quilters in our area for advice. God places members in the Body of Christ for his purposes. One of these members was placed in our midst at just the right time! Mary Vann, the experienced quilter, joined the able talents of Josephine Ricks, the experienced seamstress, and together they have fashioned our Centennial Quilt. Words cannot do justice in describing this quilt. Angels flank the four corners. The old church leads to the new church by a pathway. Squares have been formed symbolizing the different organizations of our church. Many ladies worked creating these different squares. When the quilt top was sewn together, the time came for quilting. All who were willing and wanting to “put a stitch” in our quilt were invited to do so. Many ladies came together, sewed, talked and visited. We decided that our grandmothers knew what they were doing when they got together and quilted! It was fun! The quilting has been completed and the finishing touches have been done. The quilt is a work of art, and the work was done with skill and love. Our quilt will be displayed on our Centennial Day and will be enjoyed for years to come.

You are now reading another one of our projects! We wanted to have a written history of our church. The committee was really impressed with one of our local church’s history book, but because of health problems, the author could not help us. We did not know where to turn. We enlisted the help of Carl Witt, local history teacher, who came to one of our meetings and “wowed” us with his knowledge of our area church history. He also gave us the idea of including memories to make our book more personal and enjoyable to read. We began to interview people and were excited about all of the information that we were finding. Wanda Taylor agreed to begin the process of compiling information, which has led her to all sorts of discoveries. Written with emotion, enjoyment and excitement, the history has given her a renewed sense of pride and love for her church.

Madie Alice Draper “took off running” with another of our projects. We wanted to feature pictures of our brides and grooms during our celebration. Members were asked to give their wedding pictures (whether they were married here at Conway Baptist Church or elsewhere) to Madie Alice to be included in a wedding album. She has been working on putting these pictures in albums for display on our Centennial Day. She also arranged to have these pictures put on a DVD which was shown at our Vow

Renewal Reception and will be shown in our display room on our Centennial Day. The DVD will be placed in our history room. Great job!

One of our fundraising projects appears in the Music Ministry section of this book. Bennie Barrett “put together” a gospel concert in combination with a steak supper that was served by the Lee Duncan Class and the Couples Class. The sell-out crowd enjoyed the food, fellowship and inspirational music!

Several groups and classes purchased eight round tables to be used for our celebration. The tables have already been put to good use. After we learned the price of renting tablecloths, material was purchased and the Friendly Group made covers at a fraction of the cost of renting or buying. David and Thadys Simmons and William Garris made a storage unit for our round tables.

The BYW group sold centennial commemorative plates during the year. A beautiful light fixture was also installed by David and Thadys Simmons in the foyer of the church as a donation project. The Couples Class sold beautiful centennial ornaments picturing our church.

Connie Vann graciously donated his skill in making our display screens that we have used throughout the year and will continue to use. The Brotherhood also paid for reupholstering our original pulpit furniture, now located in the history room.

One of our resident artists and Centennial Committee member, Peggy Davis, drew our logo, which appears at the front of this book. This is a sketch of a church representing Conway Baptist Church in a pair of hands representing God’s hands. A theme was decided upon: “You are the Potter, we are the clay – mold us!” We have also located, printed and framed pictures of most of our former part-time pastors.

On November 14, 2004, we began the year long celebration with our kick-off event, “Memorabilia Day.” On that day, we had over 300 present. The service included a skit performed by descendants of our charter members. We also listened to a recording of historian Carl Witt giving us a brief history of our Baptists roots predating Roberts Chapel Baptist Church. At the close of the service, before those attending enjoyed a delicious meal of barbecue with all the trimmings, everyone was invited to pose for a picture taken by photographer Carol Lowe on the front steps of the church. A similar picture was taken in 1953, at the time when the new church was dedicated. These pictures will be displayed together in our church for the Centennial Celebration with most of those in the pictures identified. During our kickoff event everyone enjoyed the displays of old pictures and information on our charter members.

Each month during this year, culminating with the Celebration, we have had a special emphasis. In December, the emphasis was Missions, focused on our Lottie Moon offering. We were reminded in this centennial year that Dr. J. C. Owen, a former pastor, actually served as an assistant to Miss Lottie Moon in China.

In January, we celebrated Baptist Men and Brotherhood month. The Brotherhood breakfast meeting was held on January 16th. The men filled the choir during our worship service. A film was shown depicting the work done by our Brotherhood and Baptist Men across the state.

In our efforts to put the history room in good order, it was decided to move the books that were stored in the history room back to the library, where they belonged. The books had not been used for many years. Wanda Taylor, with the help of Jean Ricks and Christine Taylor, worked on getting the library. We were happy to re-open the Donald J. Dunlap Library in January. The library was dedicated in 1966 to former pastor, Dr. Donald J. Dunlap. We hope to purchase additional books and materials to update our library.

The February emphasis was WMU. On February 27th, WMU ladies filled the choir, and Pam Cox and Linda Woodard DeGaetani provided special music. Our Children In Action took part in the service. Betty Joyner from Ahoskie was our guest speaker.

Our focus in March was on Sunday School and Revival. Our revival speaker was Tommy Kiker of Center Grove Baptist Church in Ahoskie. Revival was held March 6 – 10. A Sunday School contest was held during March. The winners were the Lee Duncan Class and the Primary Department, each receiving a prize of \$50.00.

Many who participated in the Revelation Bible Study were anxious to continue meeting and studying as a group. The next study was First and Second Timothy, followed by the study "Experiencing God" in the spring of 2005, which proved to be a wonderful experience. Group members committed to studying thirty minutes a day for five days each week for twelve weeks. We learned so many things from this study, including the fact that each member of our church is important and valuable in the Body of Christ. The members are placed here by God for his purposes. We are to look around us to see where God is at work and then join him in this work. The study also made us realize that God is working in the events of our lives and our church. We began to look at these events with "new eyes."

Following the "Experiencing God" Bible Study, Paula Barrett felt led by the Holy Spirit to begin a prayer group, the Koinonia Prayer Group, which began meeting every Sunday morning at 9:30. The word *koinonia* means the love relationship and the fellowship we have with God. Each Sunday the group meets and prays for specific needs or unspoken needs with a focus on an outreach ministry to inactive members and area residents. All are invited to join this group and any prayer requests are welcome. Our deacons also meet at this time to discuss needs, to pray and to prepare for the morning worship service.

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matthew 6:33)

April was Music Month. A report also appears in the Music Ministry section of this book. On April 10th, our own "Heirs to the Kingdom" (Thomas Vinson, Stewart Woodard, Andy Jenkins and Phillip Ricks) performed a gospel music concert during our morning worship service. At 3:00 p.m. we held a concert and tea to pay tribute to Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood and her influence in the lives of her students and friends. During that time, Mrs. Fleetwood's Steinway baby grand piano, donated to our church by her son, Dr. J. A. Fleetwood, Jr., was dedicated and accepted by the church with a pledge to use the piano in service to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In May, 2005, Connie Vann felt God's call, and he answered that call by going to Quebec to build rooms in Francois Verschelen's basement to house mission teams that will be going to help that church in their ministry. West Chowan Baptist Association partners with Living Rock Baptist Church and Francois Verschelden's ministry, but a planned association mission trip seemed destined to fail. Although Francois had sent word of the need of this project, it seemed no one could make the trip. How marvelous is our God! Connie listened to his Lord and put his feet to the path (or literally his truck on the road) along with one other brother in Christ, Elton Jones from Aulander. The two of them made the trip and accomplished more than Francois had dreamed of! Future mission teams will reap the benefits of housing due to their efforts. While Connie was working, he witnessed to a fellow worker from Canada. He believes that is the reason God called him to Canada. Only God knows the difference that Connie's witness will make in that life. We are to take the opportunity to share the Good News. We may not see the results. Our mission is to plant the seeds that God will water. How wonderful it will be when we get to heaven and stand before God as He shows us the results of our labor. How sad it would be for us to stand before God if we have not answered His call and have done nothing for His Kingdom.

The focus of the month of May was Recognition of Former Pastors. We were blessed on May 1st when our first full-time pastor, Dr. Donald J. Dunlap, joined us and delivered our message.

Dr. Dunlap related some of his memories and also stressed that the church is not a building or a group of buildings. The church is the Body of Christ. Each church has its foundation on that first glorious Easter morning when Christ was raised from the dead. When we celebrate our one hundred years, we are celebrating the fact that this Body of Christ has been serving Him for a century here in the town of Conway.

Rev. James E. Hester was our guest speaker on May 15th.

The title of Rev. Hester's sermon was "Where Do We Go From Here?" What has our church been doing? How many people have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life because this church is here? He reminded us that not all church members are saved. We must accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, thus making Him Lord of our lives. He is the *ONLY WAY*. Our purpose is to minister and spread God's Word to our community. What purpose and vision are we leaving for those who come after us? God's people should be the spiritual centerpiece of the world.

On May 22nd, Rev. Walter S. Jones was our guest speaker.

In his message Rev. Jones stated that our founding fathers came together with a vision and planted a church. He said, "I thank God that I was able to drop in for a few years in her history." His message included the following points. As God works, it is a joy to see what He is doing. Our young people are going to impact other churches by what they have been taught here for the cause of Christ. Our challenge is to not be a carbon copy of the world. We should be a shaper of the world for Jesus Christ. Are we a shaper of the world or are we shaped by the world? Some churches are leading people to Jesus—others are not. What is the potential of this church and how many lost people can we reach? We have had a great history. We can have an even greater future that will become the history for those who come after us.

At this service we also honored our graduates. They marched in to the traditional "Pomp and Circumstance." Our high school graduates this year were Joshua Bryant Vinson, Willie Atlas McLawhorn, Jr., Brandon Michael Belch, Adam Bryant Burgess and Danielle Kay Bolton. Our college graduates were Larry Curtis Knight, Joseph Robert Barrett, III, Melanie Ann McLawhorn and Marlo Brooke Ricks.

The emphasis in June was Weddings and Fashion Show. On June 12th, the church held a service of marriage renewal. The sanctuary was decorated with flowers and greenery. Beautiful candelabras and unity candles, donated by Nell's Florist, were lit just before the service during a prelude of traditional wedding music. Following a wonderful selection sung by Jim and Carla Vann and an inspirational message by Rev. McLawhorn,

couples stood before the altar and renewed their vows to each other, pledging love and commitment while vowing to put only Jesus ahead of their spouses in their lives. The men were led in their vows by Rev. McLawhorn. The women repeated their vows led by Diane McLawhorn. Children were asked to join their parents at the altar to show their support and love. Pam Cox sang a beautiful rendition of "The Lord's Prayer" for our benediction. The service proved to be very touching as many couples renewed their commitment to each other and to their Lord. All were invited to attend the wedding reception luncheon, complete with wedding cake, in the fellowship hall following the service. Wedding pictures of members and former members, collected by Madie Alice Draper and put on a DVD, flashed on a video screen for all to enjoy.

Vacation Bible School, under the direction of Donna Woodard, was held June 13-17 and was a great success. The average attendance including teachers was eighty six. This year's theme was "Ramblin Road Trip." Students learned much during the week as they visited many places on their "side trips" and had a great time doing it! Two young girls made a commitment to the Lord during Bible School.

In June the time capsule project was completed by Linwood Coggins and the Goodwill Bible Class. Linwood put a much thought and time into this project. He came up with a great plan and carried through. He and the class donated the time capsule, which is a large PVC pipe including two end caps. Our name, date and other information have been attractively painted on the capsule which will be displayed during our Centennial Celebration, then filled and buried in the church yard. Plans are to excavate the time capsule in fifty years.

Also in June Mike and Cindy Belch secured and hung the two Centennial banners over the breezeway between the church and the office and between the columns at the front of the church. The banners will be used throughout Centennial Celebration.

On the 26th of June, during our morning worship hour, the Phillip Ricks Sunday School Class hosted one hundred years of fashion, with members dressing up in clothes reminiscent of each decade beginning at the turn of the century and advancing to the current year. Emily Jenkins and daughter, Taylor Jenkins, presented the fashions of 1905 as they made their way from the back of the church to the front while Emily began her narration. She gave us a brief history of our church and world events, as well as a description of fashions for each decade, as members dressed in period clothes processed to the front of the church. All who attended the service enjoyed the presentation of fashions and a trip down memory lane

while listening to some church history and a recounting of world events. The participants in the "Decades of Change" Fashion Show were the following:

Emily and Taylor Jenkins (1905)

Kimberly Babb escorted by Chelsea and Cole Rose (1910)

Edwin and Heather Rose (1920)

James and Emmie Martin (1930)

Anita Burch (1940)

Alan, Michelle and Holden Burgess (1950)

Al and Brett Leggett (1960)

Phillip, Cindy and Arielle Ricks (1970)

Rhonda, Buddy and Joseph Brown (1980)

Dennis and Heather Joyner (1990)

Neil, Kelli, Morgan and Justin Garris (2000)

(Mary Rowe was to represent the 1930's decade but was unable to be present due to the illness of her son. James and Emmie Martin graciously took her place. Mrs. Emmie wore Mary's dress and Mr. James wore his own army fatigues.)

Also in June ten youth and four adults went to Augusta, Ga., for a week of mission work through World Changers. Our World Changers were Kathryn Bryant, Will McLawhorn, Jordan White, Randall Martin, Jessica Bolton, Cola Vinson, Ashley Ricks, Lori Coggins, Sarah Martin and Josh Vinson. The adults who accompanied them were Phillip Ricks, Rev. Willie McLawhorn, Debbie Vinson and Lori Barnes. In Augusta they joined with more than 150 youth and adults from Florida, Mississippi, South Carolina, and North Carolina, to work and share their faith. In five days they removed shingles, repaired boards, shingled, scraped and painted fifteen houses. While working, the youth looked for opportunities to share Jesus, with the result that 26 people received Jesus as Lord and Savior. The World Changers Mission Team was in charge of the morning worship service on July 31st. We listened with our hearts as they shared their most meaningful moments of the trip. The trip was truly "Mission In Action."

During the month of July, as part of the ongoing Centennial Celebration, we recognized and honored those who have served our country and our Lord. On July 3rd, we honored our military veterans in a special Independence Day Worship Service.

On July 17th, Rev. Doug Jones, son of Rev. Walter Jones, was our guest speaker. Doug spent some of his formative years here at Conway and

was later called into full-time Christian service. He is currently serving as Assistant Vice President of Alumni Relations, Special Events, and Annual Fund at Campbell University. We were blessed beyond measure to hear that we played a part in his decision to give his life in service to our Lord.

Our August emphasis will be Buildings and Trustees and our September emphasis will be Deacon Ministry.

On Saturday, October 8th, 2005, at 7:30 p.m., we will have a homecoming sing to begin our celebration. Once again Bennie Barrett will coordinate this singing extravaganza. We hope to have our "old quintet" sing some of their favorite selections. The quintet will now be a quartet since tenor Lawrence Ricks is no longer with us. The members of the quartet are Rev. James Hester, Stewart Woodard, Lit Woodard and Johnny Reynolds. "The Heirs to the Kingdom," Bennie and Paula Barrett, Twyla Duke, Pam Cox, Rhonda Brown, Pearl Brown and others are expected to lift our hearts with their renditions that night. Since music has played such a large part in the ministry here at Conway Baptist, this concert will be a fitting prelude to our celebration!

The grand one hundredth anniversary celebration of Conway Baptist Church will be held October 9th, 2005. We are expecting a large attendance and will set up a large tent beside the fellowship hall to accommodate our guests and members. Donuts and coffee will be served at 9:00 a.m., at which time the displays may be viewed. During our worship service, which will begin at 10:00 a.m., there will be special music, messages from former pastors and the reading of a short history by Rufus Jennings White, III (Jentry). Jentry's grandfather, Rufus Jennings White, Sr., read the history in 1953 when the new church was dedicated. His father, Rufus Jennings White, Jr., read the history during our seventy-fifth anniversary in 1980. To continue the tradition, Jentry plans to read our history at our one hundredth anniversary. Following the close of our service, we will have an old fashioned dinner on the grounds for all to enjoy.

Chapter 14 THE CHALLENGE

No dear brothers and sisters, I am still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven. (Philippians 3:13-14)



You are the Potter, we are the clay – Mold us!

Conway Baptist Church is a highly organized, motivated church. It is affiliated with the West Chowan Baptist Association and associated with the North Carolina Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. We support the Cooperative Program, and in doing so we support missions and reach all over the world.

In 1992 the church gave \$45,111.00 to missions and was the second largest contributor to the West Chowan Baptist Association. In 1995 there were 328 resident members, and 132 non-resident members; 275 were enrolled in Sunday school with an average attendance of 152. In 2005 there are 251 members and 90 non-resident members. At this time church properties including the parsonage, the church and its contents are insured for \$2,603,000.00. Our budget for 2005 is \$188,165.00. Of this budget \$42,050.00 is designated for missions. Our collected offerings will increase this amount by more than an additional \$5,000.00.

The purpose of Conway Baptist Church has been to have its members join together to worship in Christian fellowship and to spread the gospel message in our town, county, state, country and world. Our pastors have been dedicated men who have challenged members to reach high potentials and to be all that they can be.

Our members have worked, prayed, cared, given, comforted, encouraged, studied, and built. Mission support coupled with mission study and prayers have become very strong among the membership. Although confined to local needs in the very early years, our ministry has expanded today to encompass the world.

Music has been outstanding in quality and participation. The choirs have been dedicated and exceptional. Throughout the years music has been a magnet that has drawn worshipers to our Lord's house.

The young people have had many advantages to learn and to grow in Christian service. They have learned much by the teachings and examples of so many Conway Baptist saints.

Many workers have helped to achieve the growth and development that have made our church what it is today. It is impossible to name all the people who have blessed us with their ministries in different areas of service. Everyone strives to work together for God's purpose and the church has been made stronger through the sharing of responsibilities. We thank God for each individual, each supporter, who in a very special way has become a part of our history.

Many servants of Our Lord through the years have been Sunday School superintendents, directors and teachers, WMU directors and leaders, Bible school directors and teachers, BTU directors and leaders, custodians, givers, money counters, board members, pulpit committees, flower committees, baptismal committees, communication committees, social committees, history committees, kitchen committees, nursery workers, grass cutters, cleaners, choir members, youth leaders, circle leaders, ushers, tape ministers, puppeteers, Bible drill leaders, bus drivers, musicians, meals-on-wheels volunteers and many more.

Some members of our church chose careers within the Baptist denomination. R. Kelly White, Paul Sykes and Benny Pledger were ordained here and spent their lives in the ministry. Floyd S. Blowe and Grady Nicholas Martin were licensed to preach the gospel here. John R. Woodard, Jr. served as Director of NC Baptist Historical Collection from July, 1964, until his retirement in 2004.

Known treasurers have been W. J. Lassiter, J. E. Taylor, J. T. Ricks, A. P. Lassiter, R. J. White, Mrs. L. S. Joyner, Mrs. Janie Vick Garriss, Mrs. J. D. Lanier, Mrs. Zelma Liverman and Mrs. Jackie Duncan, Mrs. Gail Martin, Mrs. Pearl Brown and Mrs. Michelle Burgess.

For many years, part-time secretaries were employed. Those who have served were Mrs. Quinton Futrell, Mrs. Leo Barnes, Mrs. Lee Duncan, Mrs. Stewart Taylor and Mrs. Julian Liverman. Mrs. Lee Duncan

also served as a full-time secretary-treasurer, followed by Mrs. Gail Martin and Mrs. Pearl Brown. In 2005 Mrs. Pearl Brown and Mrs. Michelle Burgess began working with a shared time arrangement to fill the full-time position.

Our Boards of Trustees over the years have worked above and beyond the call of duty to keep our house of worship in excellent condition. They have worked, studied and prayed to make the best decisions possible and have spent hours doing many jobs and projects themselves. The following is a list of known trustees from 1962 through 2005 who have served (some for several terms): Fletcher Bryant, Mrs. C.S. Deloatch, C. A. Davis, Sr., Sidney Edwards, Roger Bryant, Russell Johnson, Jr., Edward James, Wayland Long, Jake Odom, Mrs. Kenneth Woodard, Lawrence Ricks, Linwood Woodard, C. J. Watson, J. Raynor Woodard, D. M. Woodard, A. O. Woodard, Sr., William Vann, Bennie Barrett, Joe Barrett, Cindy Belch, Mike Belch, Douglas Blowe, Brian Bolton, Joe Boone, Sadie Bridgers, Wilson Bridgers, Harold Britt, Randolph Burgess, Linwood Coggins, Jeff Daughtry, Billy Davis, Clifton Davis, Johnny Davis, Peggy Davis, Phil Davis, Hiram Draper, Jr., Billy Driggins, Twyla Duke, Lee Duncan, Dewey Edwards, Dr. J. A. Fleetwood, Jr., Mrs. Russell Johnson, Jr., Eddie Joyner, Billy Joyner, Donnie Martin, Emmie Martin, Grady Martin, Joe Martin, Lokie Nelson, Ed Rawls, Johnny Reynolds, Mrs. Johnny Reynolds, Cindy Ricks, Chris Sumner, David Simmons, J. D. Simmons, Thadys Simmons, Bobby Taylor, Mrs. Leroy Taylor, Sandra Vann, Kelly Vann, Mrs. Lillie Vick, Dr. Thomas Vinson, Carolyn Watson, Anne White, R. Jennings White, Jr., R. J. White, III, Shirley Woodard, Stewart Woodard, Shirley Woodard and Bobby Woodard. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to each of these people for their service in our church!

Our Board of Deacons has been the spiritual leadership of our church. The Board currently consists of twelve members who serve three year rotating terms. The church membership is divided by twelve and each deacon is responsible for the spiritual, mental and physical well-being of their family groups. The deacons meet each month to conduct the business and meet the spiritual needs of the church. They also meet each Sunday prior to Sunday School to discuss the sick, other needs and to pray for the pastor, church events and worship service.

The following are our known deacons from 1905 through 2005: Abner Lassiter, J. R. Martin, J. A. Sykes, J. F. Martin, J. H. Odom, A. H. Martin, R. V. Nelson, C. W. Brittle, Lloyd Ricks, R. Jennings White, Sr., John Burgess, S. H. Parke, C. N. Martin, J. R. Woodard, E. C. Vick, J. W. Martin, A. O. Woodard, Jr., S. D. Hedspeth, Jr., J. H. Vick, Lawrence Ricks,

Laurie J. Vann, Ed Barnes, Lee Brittle, Norris Deloatch, Godwin Butler, J. C. Davis, David Simmons, Shirley Woodard, A. O. Woodard, Sr., C. Wilson Bridgers, C. J. Watson, Kelly Vann, William D. Johnson, Julian Liverman, William Vann, Haywood Davis, Grady Martin, R. Jennings White, Jr., Fletcher Bryant, Abner Lassiter, Joe Barrett, Claude Britt, Russell Johnson, Jr., Russell Cox, Denny Vann, Lokie Nelson, Billy V. Davis, L. G. Britt, Jr., Nicky Martin, Roger Bryant, Nannie Francis, Bettie L. Taylor, Johnny Reynolds, Lee Duncan, Dewey Edwards, Stewart Taylor, Lillie S. Vick, Kathleen Johnson, Jimmy Woodard, Ed Rawls, Pearl Nelson, Billy Joyner, Mike Belch, J. D. Allen, Sandra Vann, Phyllis Woodard, Jean Bryant (Futrell), J. D. Simmons, Stewart Woodard, Emmie Martin, Bennie Barrett, James Peede, Thadys Simmons, Walter Woodard, Linwood Coggins, Frank (Skip) Richey, Phillip Ricks, Peggy Davis, Jean Ricks, Willie Mae Johnson, Gary S. Felton, Sr., Thomas W. Vinson, Melvin B. Woodard, James (Pete) Umphlett, Albert Vann, Jentry White, Brian Bolton, Lillie Mae Watson, Carroll Futrell, Pearl D. Brown and Diana Richey. These deacons have a special place in our hearts as they have ministered to us in our good times and our bad times.

The following acrostic by the current Deacon Board chairman, Sandra Vann, sums up the esteemed spiritual qualities of a deacon.

Dedicated to the Holy Word and our Lord Jesus Christ

Engage in service to minister spiritually, physically and emotionally to church members and community

Always seeking God's will through prayer, study & obedience to His call for our church

Convey the plan of salvation to the lost through witnessing & missions

Offer support and encouragement to pastor, staff and church groups and members

Never allowing God's church to become worldly, but seeking to bring the world to God's church

Salvation of the lost is God's goal – ours is loving compassionate service to achieve that goal

God's people called Conway Baptist Church have struggled together, cooperated together, suffered together and ministered together in the

name of Jesus Christ. In laboring together to accomplish His purpose, this church has worshiped, proclaimed, witnessed, nurtured, educated, and ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit as we have shared the gospel message. Conway Baptist Church has accomplished much in the last one hundred years, and we are looking forward with anticipation to the future.

Today, as a church, we face the challenge of a decline in membership. Our lives are so busy that we sometimes fail to keep God in His proper place as Lord of our lives. Each of us faces the challenge of keeping our faith passionate.

Our church has come a long way since 1905. What it is today, it has not always been. Rather it has been growing by God's grace, by Christians caring for one another, by faith, by prayer and by seeking to do His will. Our history is rich. It is fitting at this time to take a look behind us to see the faith, commitment and dedication of our forefathers. Our focus in the days ahead should be on our future and the history that *we* are writing for those who come after us. What purpose and vision are we leaving for them? Are we seeking to do his will by sacrificing self to follow Him, who gave His all for us? For what purpose has God placed Conway Baptist Church in this community? Are we fulfilling that purpose? Will we be the church that God wants us to be? The future is waiting to be written. And what a glorious future it will be as we determine to do the will of our Father!

It was at this church that I sat at the feet of many saints and heard the stories of Jesus.

It was at this church that I gave my life to my Lord and Savior.

It was at this church that I worshiped with my family.

It was at this church that I pledged "till death do us part" to my husband.

It was at this church that I dedicated my two precious children to the Lord.

It was at this church that my children gave their hearts to the Lord.

It was at this church that I said "Good-bye" to my daddy.

It is at this church that I enter, realizing just how much this church means to me!

Loosely based on a reading by Gloria Gaither

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Conway Baptist Church

By Faye Davis

Many years ago, in the year of 1905,
A group of people gathered to decide.
We need a church in this little town.
So to find the members, they went all around.

Thirty men gathered to consider the wisdom of such a big step,
And three women were there to give their help.
They met in a school, which was located on the present church lot,
And though it was a big job they did not stop.

There were 77 people who presented letters one day.
They became charter members just that way.
That was the time Conway Baptist Church was organized.
From that time on, it grew in size.

One of the members donated a large lot,
And Conway Baptist Church was built on that spot.
They purchased the adjoining school lot because they did know
That through the years their church would grow.

And now the membership is large in size.
In our lovely church we take much pride.
But let me tell you something to think about.
Examine your heart – to know if you feel right.

I dreamed one night that my church disappeared and went away.
And I didn't have that place to kneel down to pray.
I feared for my friends who could not gather around,
To hear the beautiful chimes, as they echoed lovely sounds.

I could not bear to look at that vacant spot.
That used to be our church and its parking lot.
Weeks would come and weeks would go,
But we could not gather in God's house with people we know.

Singing and praising God – we couldn't do anymore.
There would be no gatherings, as was done times before.
Oh, what a terrible thing to dream such an awful dream.
How I thank you, Lord, that it wasn't real like it seemed.

As I look I can see the church we all share.
But Lord, my dream would be real if your spirit was not there.
No matter how many churches there are in a town,
They would be vacant spots, if your presence could not be found.

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.

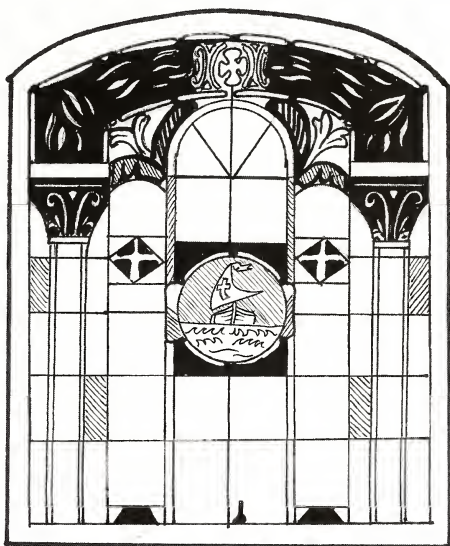
(Psalm 8:1)

He hath put a new song in my mouth. (Psalm 40:3)

Chapter 15

MUSIC

MINISTRY



Harp

Music has always been a vital part of our church. For many of us, music speaks straight to our souls. We all have heard sermons that were sung or played. It is as much a part of our worship as breath is to life. Here at Conway Baptist Church, God has poured out His blessings on us with musicians. A number of talented musicians have served the Lord in our church over these one hundred years. One of our members remembers first attending services here after her marriage and being amazed that we had an organist, a pianist and a violinist in each service, and also a member of the choir who could “sing opera.”

According to the early minutes there have been many who served as musicians. A pump organ, given by Betty S. Hedspeth and Zata N. Hedspeth in 1907, was used for accompaniment. Records show that in 1923 a price of \$25.00 was set on the organ and it seems to have been sold in 1929. An organist was elected each year until 1930. The first song books, *Hymns of His Grace*, were purchased in 1907.

Organists and assistant organists from 1905 – 1930 included Mrs. Maude Stotz, H. Mae Flythe, Willie Lassiter, Virgie Hedspeth, Ruth P. Waff, Nita Hedspeth, Mrs. G. K. Freeman, Cattie Vick, Mattie Hedspeth, Ida Lou Futrell, Miss Hettie Spence, Mrs. E. P. (Nita) Davis, Louise Vick,

Nellie Burgess, Clara Davis, Juanita Vick, Lucille Davis, Janie Revelle, Julia Calvert, Janie Vick and Caroline L. Fleetwood.

In 1930 the old pump organ was replace by a piano. The piano continued to be played until the electric Hammond organ was purchased. From 1930 until 1951 a pianist was elected each year. Pianists and assistants during that time included: Mrs. J. A. Fleetwood, Mrs. J. L. Blythe, Lucy Vaughan Rawlings, Mrs. R. J. White, Sr., Martha Seymore and Mrs. Crawford Warren. In 1950 the Hammond organ was purchased and installed in the new church. It is now located in the Goodwill Bible Class and was, until a few years ago, "playable."

Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood joined our church by letter on February 19, 1925. According to the minutes, she became our pianist in 1930 (other records show 1928) and served faithfully on the organ, piano and violin until 1986. Mrs. Fleetwood came to our area as a teacher of violin at Chowan College. She met Dr. Fleetwood, married and moved to Conway. We know that she was an accomplished pianist and violinist when she came to Conway but we think that she had very little experience on the organ at that time. One of her students remembers hearing that she took organ lessons from someone in Roanoke Rapids around the time that the Hammond organ was purchased and placed in the new church in 1950. To many of us Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood gave the gift of music and her influence continues to impact our lives and our service to the Lord. We as a church family have been blessed beyond measure to claim her as our own.

At an early age, I knew what my part would be, I would play. I could not have a key, only the big people had the keys to the building. I discovered that I could get into the furnace room window. (Mike and I were supposed to be riding bicycles at the church.) I would get in, I would go upstairs, and I would play in the sanctuary. Access to the piano was easy, the organ was a problem – the key. Mrs. Fleetwood shared the secret. I could open it! It made such sounds, sounds that echoed through the whole place. I knew then what I wanted to do. I learned more about church music from my friend (Caroline Fleetwood) at Conway Baptist than I have learned from any other person since. That experience and understanding was her gift to me and I have taken that piece of the treasure with me to every church I have served. It continues to influence my walk and my service.

—Memories of Russ Johnson

Mrs. Fleetwood influenced so many lives with her gift of music. We will never know the rippling effect of this until we get to heaven. She gave of herself to our church and community as an accompanist for weddings, funerals and worship services. She instilled in her students a love of music and a love of serving the Lord through that music. She was kind and gentle, a true southern lady. She was a blessing from God to us and when she went to be with the Lord in 1992, I'm sure she heard those coveted words from Him, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Carillons were purchased with memorial donations in memory of Mrs. Fleetwood. The familiar loved hymns sound in chime tones from speakers in the steeple and can be heard all across the town. They are a reminder to all who hear that our church is at work ministering in this community, shar-

ing and spreading God's love.

Pat Hedspeth Smith also remembers sneaking in and playing the Hammond organ in the 50's. She taught herself to play the organ and now plays every Sunday at Bethany Methodist Church in Milwaukee.

We do not have the business meeting minutes from 1952 until 1961 so our list of accompanists may not be complete. Of course Mrs. Fleetwood was our organist for many years. Pianists (and organists) included Gene Lanier, Pell Lassiter, Ellen Long (Barrett), Martha Butler (Harris), Phyllis Davis (Mann), Joe Davis, Russ Johnson, Pam Woodard, Mercile Hester, Elsie Hedspeth, Louanne Vann, Wanda Ricks Taylor, Paula Davis Barrett and Barbara Gosnell.

Our current organ is an Allen Digital Computer Organ, purchased in 1975, and dedicated in honor of "our faithful organist", Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood, in March, 1976. Both the piano and organ have been used together in most services. Over the years other instruments have been included in our services: violin, trumpet, clarinet, flute, handbells, guitar and even drums. In the 1970's or maybe a little before, Russ Johnson became our organist along with Mrs. Fleetwood. They would play duets with Mrs. Fleetwood on the piano or violin and Russ on the organ. Their music would come alive for us and oh, how we wish we could hear Mrs. Fleetwood play that violin again! Mrs. Fleetwood officially retired and was honored for her years of service and dedication on September 7, 1986. Russ is an accomplished musician, who served in this church until June, 1987. Since that time he has continued to serve the Lord in other churches with his talent of making music that speaks to the soul.

It is recorded that George N. Martin became the music leader or chorister in 1925 and served until about 1934. Other early choir leaders were Gilbert Ricks and Martha Seymore.

In October, 1946, Mr. and Mrs. Julian Liverman moved their membership to Conway Baptist Church. In 1948 Mrs. Liverman became our choir director and for the next thirty-eight years she made a tremendous impact in our church with her music ministry. Her students and choir members were encouraged to sing and play.

In the late 1950's, Mrs. Liverman, who taught sixth grade for many years at Conway Elementary School, would hold children's choir practice in her classroom and we think that continued until the high school was moved from Conway to Northampton County High School in 1964. She gave her choir members a good foundation and a love of music. She led the choirs to perform inspirational selections. She served the Lord faithfully here at Conway Baptist Church.

Thadys Simmons remembers that Mrs. Liverman loved Conway Baptist Church and wanted everyone to be involved. She had a good way with children and was very influential in the children's participation in the choirs.

It is reported in a newspaper article that on May 1, 1958, the girls' chorus of Conway Baptist Church performed at Meherrin Church Hymn Festival for the third consecutive year. Two members who sang duets were Rose Lynn James and Kay Francis.

In 1963 we had three choirs: Cherub Choir, Carol Choir and Church Choir, with a total of seventy two members!

In 1971 the men's choir performed with J. H. Vick, Kelly Vann and Otis Ricks as representatives. Mrs. Julian Liverman assisted them. It was decided that the men would sing every third Sunday. That has become a tradition as we enjoy our men filling the choir and lifting their voices in song almost every third Sunday of the month.

Also in 1971 Mrs. Liverman, assisted by Thady Simmons, and the youth choir, began the process of raising money for handbells by selling dish towels and flavoring. Memorial donations were also used to complete the bell fund and the bells were purchased. Three handbell choirs played them during the Christmas program in 1972.

Jentry White was a member of the first handbell choir. He remembers that he played the big bells because he didn't have to ring them much and he was "big" so he could handle the big bells!

In 1975 the Children's Handbell Choir performed at Enon Chapel Baptist Church in Jacksonville, N. C., and during the Christmas season in 1977, they played at Tarrytown Mall in Rocky Mount, N.C.

During those years, Christmas cantatas, children's plays and musicals were presented yearly. The choirs led the congregational singing and performed their specials at worship services, funerals and revivals, touching hearts and lives all the while.

It is reported in a news article that at our seventy-fifth anniversary in October, 1980, "Special music was presented by the Children's Choir and the Sanctuary Choir under the direction of Mrs. Zelma Liverman and Mrs. Gail Martin. Musicians for the service were Mrs. Caroline Fleetwood with her violin, Russ Johnson at the organ and Mrs. Elsie Hedspeth and Mrs. Phyllis Mann at the piano."

Mrs. Liverman ministered in our midst until 1984 when she resigned. She faithfully served here for thirty-eight years. The foundation of a good music program was put in place and continues to this day due in part to the work of Mrs. Liverman.

Around 1978 Gail Vann Martin began directing the Children's Choir. She reports that working with the children has been one of the most rewarding things that she has done in service to the Lord. At first Gail did not have an accompanist for the choir so Mrs. Liverman would record short choruses on tapes. Later in the early 1980's Pam Cox accompanied the Children's Choir. Together they and the children put on some fantastic yearly programs.

Gail Martin wrote: One of the first musicals Pam and I undertook on our own was "Good Morning, Morning." What an experience! This program was done before the current fellowship hall with the stage was built. We did this program in the old fellowship hall in the basement of the church. Those of you newer to the church will not remember this, but at the time the Goodwill Bible Class was the only class in the basement fellowship hall. There was no corridor, only one big room. It was at this program that we decided to always try to have dress rehearsals as near to the time of the performance as possible. There was a point in the play when all lights went off and the sun rose. We did the directing, lighting and sound ourselves so I had to leave my position on the floor to go turn off the lights. Well....it's pitch black in the room. I can't see anything. I have no idea how to get back to my seat! I reached out with my hands to feel my way back, taking tiny little shuffling steps, hoping I would not step on someone's feet in the audience! I was so grateful when I reached Pam and was able to sit down safely! Had we practiced after dark, we would have been aware that when the lights went off it would be very, very dark!

It's strange how some things really stand out in your mind. One year we did a musical titled "Amazin' Grace." In this program the very young character, Matthew, played by Michael Woodard, had only one line, which he repeated throughout the play. The line? "Makes me tired just thinkin' about it." I still think of Michael every time I think about that line!

There came a time when there were not enough children in choir to do a play. We decided to enlist children from kindergarten to be an "angel choir." That was the sweetest little angel choir I've ever seen! After that, we had kindergarten children help with a number of musicals the Children's Choir did.

Pam Woodard, assisted by Michelle Davis, began to lead the Children's Choir. They continued to work well with the children and the choir became known as "The Voices of Angels," which was printed on white sweatshirts that all wore when they performed. The children loved Pam and Michelle as was evident in their yearly programs.

Pam Woodard became our choir director in July, 1984. She led the Sanctuary choir for a year, giving of her gifts to our Lord. Pam led the choir with energy and sparkle. That year, the Christmas cantata, "Night of Miracles," was performed and broadcast on WBC FM radio on Christmas Eve night. We also purchased new choir robes that year.

In 1985 Pam Cox became our choir director. Pam has led us to

serve the Lord though song with her tremendous talent and dedication. Over the years, we have performed Christmas cantatas, Easter cantatas, revival music, specials and funeral selections.

The choir members have a fondness and love for each other. Under Pam's leadership, we "stretch" our abilities as choir members and musicians and have fun while we are doing it, although some members have threatened to park cars rather than sing a selection. One particular piece of music will be "put in the coffin and buried" if the Lord taries and Pam "goes" before some choir members. As you can see, we have fun while we are serving our Lord under the direction of a wonderful, talented director, who is dedicated and focused on serving her Lord. Pam is loved by us all and is another one of our treasures and a gift from God. Under her leadership our music ministry has continued to be exceptional!

For a number of years the handbells "stayed put" in their bell boxes and were not played. When Pam Cox became music director, she made several trips to Ridgecrest for music week and attended handbell classes. She became interested in forming a bell choir. It is recorded that bell tables were purchased in September, 1991. That is probably the time of the "revival" of the bells. It is also recorded that the handbells were refurbished in 1992. An adult handbell choir was formed. Since that time we have had many bell ringers come and go. We have played for church services, weddings, funerals, rest and nursing homes. During one year of bell classes at Ridgecrest Music Week, Pam Cox and Wanda Taylor learned how to ring two bells in each hand by joining the handles together. They came back to Conway and coerced Gail Martin and Emily Taylor (Jenkins) to join them and together we formed a four-in-hand bell ensemble. This type of ringing is rarely done because of the difficulty. We were proud to be a part of this ensemble and were saddened when Gail moved away. We thought our four-in-hand ringing was over, but we have been able to use the technique quite a lot since then. Over the years, our members have been mostly ladies, but we have had a couple of gentlemen join us. It is a joy for us to ring praises to our Lord.

In 2000 several of our children were willing and able along with their director and assistant, Pam Cox and Wanda Taylor, to form the Children's Bell Choir. Our children had probably not rung bells as a choir in twenty years! What a wonderful job they are doing. It is amazing to see the talent of our children. Our job to encourage and teach them involves the entire Body of Christ. For the past couple of years we have included songs and activities along with bell ringing in our rehearsals and performances.

Last September Bennie Barrett had a vision to put together a gospel music concert including a number of singing groups and selections. The idea grew into a wonderful fundraising event for our upcoming Centennial Celebration. Two Sunday School classes, the Lee Duncan Class and the Couples Class, joined together and the rest is history. A delicious steak supper was fed to a “sold out” crowd. The guests were then treated to an evening of wonderful music presented by our own church members. The talent in this church is amazing. We are so grateful to all who share their light and “hide it under a bushel, No!” It is evident that one of Bennie’s many gifts is the vision and ability to coordinate this type of event. He was instrumental in the New Year’s Eve gospel sing that we hope will become an annual tradition. Being with Christian friends, singing praises to our God, and worshipping when the New Year begins is an awesome experience. What a way to begin a year!

Conway Baptist musicians have always shared their talents with others. They have performed often at revivals, nursing homes and fifth Sunday song services. In the early years several of the Ricks’ brothers formed a male vocal quartet. The members were Gilbert Ricks, Carl Ricks, Garland Ricks and Ben Ricks. Later S. D. Hedspeth replaced Ben Ricks. It was told that they were in great demand.

During the time that Rev. Hester was pastor here, he, along with Johnny Reynolds, Lawrence Ricks, Lit Woodard and Stewart Woodard formed a quintet accompanied by Mercile Hester and later Paula Barrett. They also were in great demand and performed to the delight of their listeners.

Currently, the “Heirs to the Kingdom” are sharing God’s message through their wonderful harmony. The members of this group are Thomas Vinson, Andy Jenkins, Stewart Woodard and Phillip Ricks. (Gary Felton, a longtime member of the group, is no longer singing with them as he is serving the Lord in another church.) The “Heirs” are in great demand and have a large following wherever they perform.

On April 10th, 2005, we held our music emphasis for our Centennial Celebration. April was designated as Music Month. The “Heirs to the Kingdom” performed a gospel music concert during our worship service. They bless us tremendously with their harmony and music. We love them and are proud of their ministry. They are reaching out to others with the gospel of Jesus Christ through their music.

In the afternoon we were privileged to be a part of our “Tribute to Mrs. Fleetwood” Concert. Our guests (and former Conway Baptist Church musicians), Russ Johnson and Phyllis Mann joined Ellen Barrett, Paula

Barrett and Wanda Taylor as we played "Mrs. Fleetwood's music." Others who shared their musical talents were Pam Cox, Twyla Duke and the congregation, as voices were lifted in praise to our Lord in song. Joe Davis, also a former Conway Baptist Church musician, flew in from New York City, N.Y., to be our speaker! We dedicated Mrs. Fleetwood's Steinway baby grand piano, given by Dr. J. A. Fleetwood, Jr. in memory of his mother. Among the selections were two pieces played by four pianists on three pianos. The concert was great fun for the players and a wonderful musical experience for all who attended.

In Loving Memory of Caroline Lane Fleetwood

By Faye B. Davis

There were many steps so lovingly made
By "Miss" Caroline, she answered every call.
She was always there with a heartwarming smile.
A friendly greeting she gave to us all.

Running from the piano to play the organ
She kept up such a fast going pace.
If she was not playing one of these
It was the violin she used to play songs of grace.

She used her life, Lord, for serving you.
She was always there for a funeral or a wedding day,
Using her talents You so generously gave.
Lord, help us live up to her example, I pray.

I pray the steps we make each given day
Will help someone by the things we do.
And like "Miss" Caroline, each day we live
Will be for others and for glorifying You.

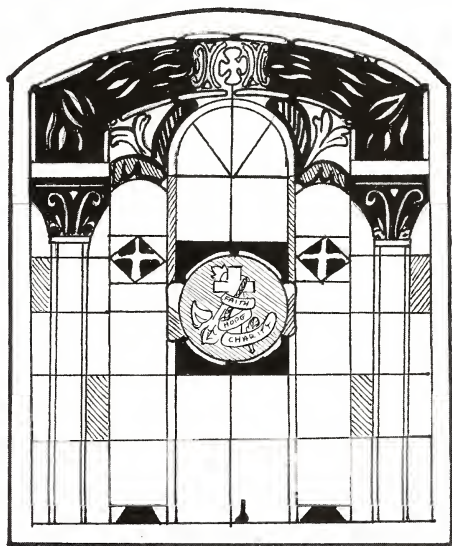
So many people have shared their talents here at Conway Baptist Church to serve our Lord. To each we say a heartfelt "Thank You!"

Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face.
Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now
these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. (1
Corinthians 13:12-13)

Chapter 16

SUNDAY

SCHOOL



Cross, Anchor and Olive Branch

The following appeared in the 1967 church annual report:

Sunday School has as its main purpose the teaching of the Biblical Revelation. The goal of the Sunday School should be that each person will grow in his understanding of the Bible and in his application of the truth of the Bible to his life.

There are many other good things that develop from Sunday School such as fellowship and the strengthening of the ties of friendship. But even these, as important as they are, are secondary to a growth in understanding of the Bible on the part of the students. It is worthy and good for persons to attend Sunday School with regularity, and to attain perfect attendance, if possible. But even being present every Sunday is not as important as developing greater understanding of the Bible and making growth in the Christian life. This is the purpose of Sunday School and must always be its purpose.

Mrs. E. P. Davis wrote in her November 5, 1930, history: "We do not have the exact date on which the Sunday School was organized but it was soon after the organization of the church, probably just a few weeks, and was held in the public school building until the church was built. As we have said before, our Sunday School has had wonderful growth in the past year. We have a well organized graded school with forty-six officers, teachers and assistant teachers, and an enrollment of 320. Brother C. E.

Morrison has been our efficient superintendent for the past year, and by his leadership we are steadily climbing. Our great aim now is to reach the Standard of Excellence. This we fell short of last month by only one point and in that one by a small margin.”

It is recorded in an early newspaper article that Conway Baptist Sunday School held a service recognizing four members who had very unusual records in attendance. Recognized was C. W. Brittle, deacon and farmer, who believed “in going to church first of all other things.” He had nineteen years of perfect attendance and had missed only one Sunday in twenty-six years! E. C. (Collis) Vick, a deacon, also missed only one Sunday in twenty-four years and had perfect attendance for eighteen years. Wiley Sumner, a farmer, had been a most faithful member since young manhood. During nineteen years he too missed only one Sunday and that was due to a death in his family. T. R. Davis was also recognized in the article. He had missed only one Sunday in twenty-nine years.

In 1948 some of the adult classes were Eva Britton, Friendly, Kelly White, Berean, Fellowship and Ruth Class.

The Sunday School had record-breaking attendance in 1949. The average attendance for the year was 269 with the highest attendance of 343 and the lowest attendance of 191. In 2004 the total enrolled in Sunday School was 259 with an average attendance of 139.

Joseph Blythe remembers that as a young boy, one of his teachers was Lawrence Ricks, who was very good in teaching him the right ways of the Bible and dealings with other people. Later in his life, Lawrence taught the Kelly White class. He played his guitar and sang for them every Sunday before their lesson. The class enjoyed this so much and loved their teacher. But if truth be known, it meant even more to Lawrence than to the class. He told his family before his death just how much this class and his ministry meant to him. That is the amazing thing about giving to others. We receive an even greater blessing in return.

Mrs. Nellie Deloatch has been remembered by many people as being an outstanding teacher. She stressed the need to attend church and was instrumental in organizing the Friendly Circle. Alice Woodard related that Mrs. Nellie influenced her life and many other lives. She loved her church and loved her students. She visited her “girls” in their times of trouble.

Johnny Woodard relates that his father, Raynor Woodard, was co-teacher with R. Jennings White, Sr., of the Adult Men’s Class, for many, many years. He remembers that his father would underline and clip articles to his Sunday School lesson booklet and would study the lesson on their side porch. They knew as kids not to bother him. His father and his mother saw that the children were in church and Sunday School during their formative years.

Those of us who grew up in Conway Baptist Church have many memories of our Sunday School experiences. It was said that the Sunday School was the glue that held the church together. We all remember dedicated teachers who taught us Bible stories and shaped our lives. How many of our Sunday School students through the years have become citizens of the Kingdom because of their teacher's witness? There can be no greater achievement than that of leading someone to faith in Christ. To all of our dedicated teachers throughout our one hundred years, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Our Lord will reward you one day and you are sure to have tears of joy in your eyes when you get to heaven and are shown the everlasting results of your dedication and service.

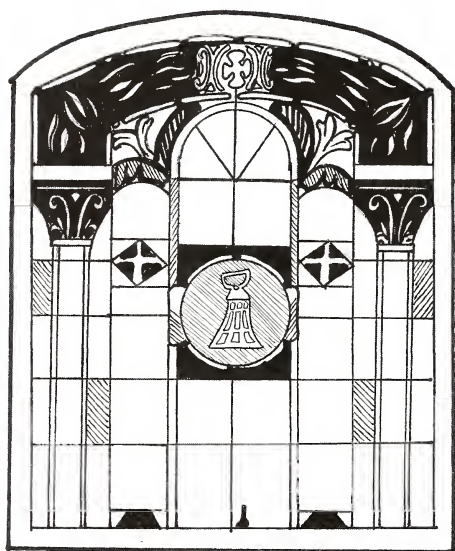
Thadys Simmons, a primary teacher for many years, reports that when one of her students accepts Jesus as Savior, she cries tears of joy! We know that she and all of our teachers continue to play a big part in the decisions that are made for Christ in our church.

Our Sunday School superintendents include C. E. Morrison, R. Jennings White, Jr., Lawrence Ricks, William R. Joyner, Denny Vann, Julian Liverman, Freddie Carroll, Stewart Taylor, C. J. Watson, David Simmons, Linwood Woodard, Johnny Reynolds, Phillip Ricks and Phillip V. Davis.

We also must include Vacation Bible School in our history. Most of us remember going to Bible School as children and many of us have worked in Bible School. Bible School reaches out to children from our church and from our area. Some children hear the stories of Jesus for the first time in their lives in Bible School. It is truly an outreach ministry and we are thankful to each and every one who plays a part in making our Bible School a success. Vacation Bible School Directors over the years have included Thelma Blythe, Jean Bryant, Brown Burgess, Sandra Vann, Jerri Driggins, Russ Johnson, Phyllis Woodard, Vickie Taylor, Debbie Babb, Janice Babb, Thadys Simmons, Cindy Belch, Cindy Watson, Clonnie Reynolds, Rev. James Hester, Juanita Britt, Peggy Davis and Donna Woodard.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

(Psalm 119:105)



Lamp

Chapter 17

WOMEN

AND THE

WOMAN'S

MISSIONARY

UNION

During the infancy of Conway Baptist Church the Ladies Aid or Woman's Missionary Society and later Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) was organized in the home of Mrs. R. T. White. Since those early years the Ladies Aid has grown into a full graded WMU.

From the beginning, the ladies were very active in local missions, visiting on behalf of the church, ministering to material needs, visiting the sick and sorrowing, and offering support for the men of the church.

The women have taught Sunday school classes, led and taught in the Vacation Bible Schools and in BYPU, which later became BTU. The WMU sponsors the youth organizations of the WMU. On many occasions they have improved the appearance of the church, raised funds to bring about improvements and supported the efforts of the leaders.

In 1983 women were elected to serve as Deacons. Today both men and women are represented on the Board of Trustees and Board of Deacons. Mrs. Nellie Deloatch was the first woman to serve as Chairman of the Board of Trustees (1971) and Mrs. Bettie L. Taylor was the first to chair the Board of Deacons (1985). Mrs. Janie Shearin was the first woman to serve as Chairman of Board of Missions (1963) and Mrs. Nellie Deloatch was the first to serve as Chairman of Board of Christian Education.

It was about eight months after the church was organized that the women met in the home of Mrs. R. T. White and organized a Woman's Missionary Union. This was in the spring of 1906. The following women were present and became charter members of the Ladies Aid Society, later renamed Woman's Missionary Union: Mrs. R. T. White, Mrs. W. J. Lassiter, Mrs. Fannie Boone, Mrs. J. H. Martin, Mrs. Etta Deloatch, Mrs. Fannie Belle Futrell (Boone), Ms. Mary Martin (Mrs. Dudley Boone), Ms. Pattie Martin (Mrs. David Burgess) and Ms. Nita Hedspeth. Ms. Nita Hedspeth was elected president and Ms. Mary Martin, secretary. The meetings were held in the homes of members or in the school prior to the building of the church.

The Sunbeam Band was the first auxiliary organized with Mrs. T.B. Futrell as its leader. In the early 1920's, the women sponsored two Sunbeam Bands (Beginner and Primary) and two GA Bands (Junior and Intermediate). A few years later the WMU sponsored the RA's and YWA's. Eventually, the Brotherhood began sponsoring the RA's.

Johnny Woodard related the following: I was a member of the Sunbeams. Remember "A Sunbeam, a Sunbeam, Jesus wants me for a Sunbeam"—Now imagine a friend and I who had been a member of a Southern Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York, singing this spontaneously in an apartment in Winton-Salem in the mid '60's. My grandmother, Mrs. H. V. (Mattie) Norris, was in charge of the Sunbeams while I was growing up. I remember that one Easter I had a new hat and was showing off by trying a new 'sight-of-hand' magic trick with one of the dyed eggs. When I dropped it in my hat, an audible "PLOP" was heard. Someone had brought a dyed *uncooked* egg to the class. Of course laughter resounded, my face reddened, my hand dipped into my hat and egg flew across the table – lathering kids on the other side. Let me now apologize for the 'eggsident' to all involved!

Our women formed six circles and met in the homes monthly. They were the Pearl Johnson, Sophie Lanneau, Tommie Britton, Lottie Moon, Ruby Daniel and Business Women Circles. Once a month these women met together at a WMU meeting in the church, planned mission activities, studied about missionaries and their work, and carried the plans back to the circles, then followed through with the projects. During the years our enrollment has fluctuated from 100 to 150 members. Today (2005) we have 66 members and are still a very active WMU. We have lost many of our older people. Thankfully our WMU includes a large group of young ladies as well as those "in between" that are very committed. Our "circles" are now called "groups" and we have four very active groups: Nellie Deloatch, Friendly, Baptist Young Women and Circle of Faith. We are continuing to do the work of the Lord. Today we have ten Mission Friends,

fifteen Children in Action (formerly GA's-grades 1-3) and eight Frogs (Fully Relying on God's Salvation – grades 4-6). We also have a large older youth group that is not actually a part of our WMU. They attend Caswell and enjoy the programs and activities there.

We have had good leadership over the years. Dedicated women have led our WMU and great women have followed their leadership. Our directors over the years have included: Mrs. Bettie Taylor, Mrs. Brown Burgess, Mrs. Jean Ricks, Mrs. Sandra Vann, Mrs. Kathleen Johnson and Mrs. Madie A. Draper. Some of our ladies have served on the associational leadership level. Mrs. R. Jennings White, Sr., Mrs. Walter Jones and Mrs. Jean Ricks have been West Chowan Associational WMU Directors. Many of our WMU ladies have served on associational boards, such as nominating committees and scholarship committees. The following ladies are among those who have served: Mrs. Anne White, Baptist Women's Assistant Director, Mrs. Pam Woodard, Baptist Young Women's Assistant Director, Mrs. Linda Knight, GA Consultant and Assistant, and Mrs. Mary Rowe, GA director. Our women are always faithful and committed to serve.

We have supported both our home and foreign missionaries. We support the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, the State Missions Offering and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. We set goals for these and most often meet or surpass these goals. Our church supports Mary Carr monetarily each month to help her with her expenses. She serves as a home missionary at the Graffiti House in New York City. Through our WMU Association, which we financially support, we have a Pearl Johnson Missionary fund. Through this fund, we send \$500 each year to two missionary couples. We have sent money to Pearl Johnson, Mrs. Audrey Gordon, Jack and Bert Yates (Kenya, Africa), Tom and Beth Ogborn (Dallas, Texas) and Francois and Marie Verschelden (Quebec, Canada).

We contribute to Chowan College. We also pay a portion of the expenses to send our youth to summer camp and our ladies to our Missions Extravaganza (WMU Convention) held at Ridgecrest N. C. In years past, we traveled to different cities in North Carolina for our convention on Jay Porter's bus, but now the conference is held each year at Ridgecrest and we travel by cars or church vans. We support quarterly mission action projects of our associational WMU. In 1984 we gave liberally towards the building of the North Carolina Room in the new WMU Building in Birmingham, Alabama.

In 1982 our church began including a WMU report in the quarterly

business meetings. Our mission-minded church supports us in all of our projects.

Around 1980, we began preparing yearbooks so that each WMU group could keep up with what was going on in our church and our association. We visit nursing homes and rest homes each month. We have a WMU business meeting each quarter. This is a dinner meeting, where the meal is prepared by one of our four groups. We do not have a program at these meetings; instead a program is presented at each individual group's meeting. At these quarterly meetings we include our prayer calendars, devotions and business.

In 1998 we honored Mrs. Nina Mae Ricks in our year book. At this time, she is our oldest WMU member at age one hundred four. In 1999 we honored Mrs. Ella Mae Futrell and in 2000 we honored Mrs. Elsie Hedspeth.

We have had several GA and Acteen coronation services. These were held in 1949, 1954, 1959, 1967 and 1993.

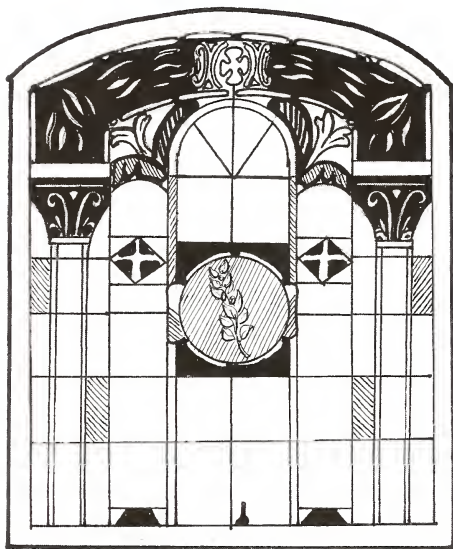
Our groups have different money-making projects that support our mission work. The Nellie Deloatch Group sells carnations for Mother's Day and sometimes for Father's Day in honor or in memory of loved ones. The Friendly Group has a Fashion Show and luncheon in the spring. The Circle of Faith sells roses for Easter and sometimes carnations for Father's Day in honor or in memory of loved ones. The BYW Group sells knives and commemorative plates featuring a picture of our church. We have the support of our church with these projects.

The Circle of Faith decorates the Chrismon Tree in the sanctuary in December. This tree is prepared for the Hanging of the Greens service that has become a tradition in these last years. The members of the group explain the meaning of the different Chrismon symbols in this service.

Today women serve in nearly every area of church activity. They have been a vital force for growth and success and continue in those efforts with a willing spirit of faith and cooperation. They have accepted changes, while maintaining their dedication and commitment. It has taken both men and women working together as a cohesive group to accomplish the successful nurturing of the seeds of faith that were planted so many years ago. We strive to work together for the glory of God.

"For we are labourers together with God." (1 Cor. 3:9 KJV)

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (John 14: 27)



Olive Branch

Chapter 18

BROTHERHOOD

AND

BAPTIST MEN

He waited seven more days and again sent out the dove from the ark. When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf! Then Noah knew that the water had receded from the earth. (Genesis 8:10-11)

Since the beginning of Conway Baptist Church in 1905, the men have been very active. In the early minutes there are no records of an actual brotherhood organization, but work was done through other channels, such as the men's Sunday School classes and various boards.

We have only a very sketchy history of the decade from 1950 to 1960 due to the missing nine years of church conference minutes. In 1968 the Brotherhood was active. It is recorded that they painted and placed a tennis court on the parking lot of our church. The tennis and basketball courts were enjoyed by many, including our R.A.'s. It is recorded that the Baptist Men's choir began singing every third Sunday, with Mrs. Zelma Liverman as director in 1971.

We have a news article giving details of Conway Baptist Men's Day in January, 1976. Henry Vick was president at that time. On that day, the men taught all the Sunday School classes and provided the music for the song service. The R.A.'s, under the direction of Stewart Taylor and Conrad Babb, presented a program that night.

Our records indicate that in January, 1980, a meeting including a pig picking supper was held to reorganize the Baptist Men. During a joint meeting with

both the WMU and the Baptist Men, Rev. George S. Berry showed slides on Rhodesia.

In 1984 Ed Rawls served as president of the Brotherhood. They were active and performed numerous community service projects, such as providing rides to the doctor and grocery store, as needed. They performed electrical and carpentry jobs, offered their services to those in need in the community and supported the WMU. Ed Rawls reported that they "walk, not talk." During Baptist Men's Day that year, he and Rev. James Hester gave testimonies. The quintet (Rev. James Hester, Johnny Reynolds, Lawrence Ricks, Linwood Woodard and Stewart Woodard) provided the special music.

In 1984 David Simmons became the Brotherhood leader. They continued their mission of serving the people of the church and community.

In 1988 Horace (Smokie) Piland led the Baptist Men. At this time members of the Brotherhood included Lokie Nelson, S. D. Hedspeth, James Nelson, Smokie Piland, David Simmons, Elliott Futrell, C. J. Watson, James Martin, William Johnson, Russell Johnson, Jr., J. D. Allen, Denny Vann and Johnny Reynolds.

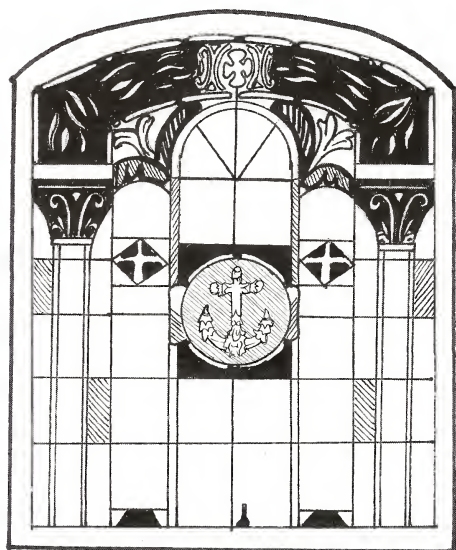
During the 1990's the Brotherhood was not as active as it had been in the past. Records show that an annual Prayer Breakfast and Baptist Men's Day was held each January.

In March, 2004, a meeting was held for the purpose of determining the interest in restarting the brotherhood. Approximately twenty-five men were in attendance and it was decided to form the present Brotherhood, led by Bobby Taylor. Meetings were held on the third Thursday of each month. The first meeting was held April 15th, 2004. Later, during the winter months, the meeting time was changed to third Sunday mornings of each month.

Meetings usually include a meal, devotion, speaker and prayer requests. The names of widows and widowers are distributed at each meeting to remember these special people with cards and prayers. Also needs are discussed and projects are planned. These projects have included installing wheel chair ramps, doing carpentry jobs and other needed repair jobs. Money has also been given to needy families. The Brotherhood financed the reupholstering of our original pulpit furniture that is located in the History Room.

The men have become brothers in Christ and hope to continue to be a positive influence in our Church, in our families and in our community.

Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become high priest forever, in the order of Melchizadek. (Hebrews 6:17-20)



Anchor and Cross

Chapter 19

CHARTER

MEMBERS

During the time spent researching our history, we became fascinated with our charter members. We have tried to trace their family tree forward. Several current members were surprised to find that members of their family were actually charter members. A few of our current members were disappointed to learn that their grandparents joined our church a few months after the October 9th, 1905, date and were not charter members.

The number of seventy-six charter members appears in most of the written histories done in our past. Upon the discovery of James F. Martin's handwritten minutes and membership roll, and after careful consideration and cross referencing, we have determined that the list at the beginning of this history is correct with the number being seventy-seven.

Our charter members have come alive to us! The fascinating journey began by our attempting to group these members by families. To the best of our knowledge, which has taken the efforts of many people, the members by families are:

Mary J. Allen and daughter, **Mary Allen**
Clint Barnes and wife, **Katie Wheeler Barnes**
Fannie A. Boone
Martha A. Britt
George King Freeman
Martha C. Odom Futrell
Sallie E. Garriss and daughters: **Maude C. Garriss** and **Sallie M. Garriss**
Mariah L. Hedspeth and children: **Zada N. Hedspeth**, **E. Milton Hedspeth**, **David Hersey Hedspeth** and wife, **Ruby J. Hedspeth**
Laura E. Hedspeth and children: **C. Eston Hedspeth**,
Ryland P. Hedspeth, **Nita M. Hedspeth**,
Maude L. Hedspeth Stotz, **Bettie Sue Hedspeth**
Samuel A. Jones and wife, **Susan A. Jones**, and children:
Josephine Jones, **Lelia Jones**, **Ozella M. Jones**,
John Henry Jones, **Benjamin T. Jones**, **Magnus Jones**
Abner Lassiter and son, **Will J. Lassiter** and Will's wife,
Willie Kearns Lassiter
James R. Martin and wife **Sallie Odom Martin**, and children:
C. Percy Martin, **James F. Martin**, **Mary P. Martin**,
Pattie C. Martin, **Paul C. Martin**
J. H. Martin
Edward Cleveland Nelson
William Nelson
John H. Odom and wife, **Emma J. Odom**
Jake Winborne Odom and his two sisters: **Annie Odom** and
Mattie J. Odom
Benjamin J. Ricks
J. H. Sumner
John A. Sykes and wife, **Mrs. Martha I. Sykes**, and children:
Wiley A. Sykes, **Vergie G. Sykes**, **Paul S. Sykes**,
Mattie E. Sykes, **Bathsheba C. Sykes**, **Isaac P. Sykes**
Fannie Belle Sykes Futrell (niece of John A. Sykes)
Quinton T. Vann and wife, **Mary E. Vann**, and children:
Mary Janie Vann, **Rebecca Vann**, **Elias Jenkins Vann**,
Walter T. Vann
Jesse B. Vick and wife, **Lula Parker Vick**, and children of J.B. Vick:
Elias J. Vick, **Benjamin C. Vick**, **Sarah Elizabeth (Bettie) Vick**

Rufus T. White and wife **Mariah E. White** and son,

Ransom Kelly White and children of **Mariah E. White**:

Ella Kearns and **Montie Carson Kearns** (**Willie Kearns Lassiter**, wife of **Will J. Lassiter**, was also the daughter of **Mariah E. White**).

Olive Williams and grandson, **Claudie Williams**

Our charter members are very special to us and their families probably have special memories of them. We would welcome additional information.

During our research, we discovered this story.

In the Sykes family history, we learned that **John Alfred Sykes** and his brother **Willie Parton Sykes** (whom we believe to be the father of **Fannie Belle Sykes Futrell**) fought together in the Civil War. They were "sharpshooters." Their job was to ride ahead of the troops to search for provisions and to scout the land. John Alfred was in Major General George Pickett's charge on July 3, 1863 at Gettysburg after the terrible battle that was to become the turning point of the war. John Alfred Sykes was captured along with thousands of other Confederate soldiers in the battle at Gettysburg. He spent the rest of the War, which was about 21 months, in a prison at Gettysburg. Prison conditions were bad and he awoke at night to find rats gnawing on his toes. He lost several toes that way. In the Sykes family history, it is recorded that "in his later years John Alfred expressed the belief that being captured and made a prisoner saved his life by taking him out of the fierce fighting for the remainder of the war. In addition, at that point the southern troops had run out of food, but the northern troops had plenty, and they made John Alfred a cook. So, he did not have to worry about getting enough to eat." **John Alfred Sykes** was born in 1839 and died in 1906.

In Z. Smith Reynolds Library at Wake Forest University, in the Conway Baptist Church file, we found the Missionary Society's handwritten minutes dating back to November 22nd, 1908. In those minutes we found the following resolution signed by Mrs. M. I. Sykes, Mary P. Martin and Nita M. Hedspeth, Committee:

Mrs. **Fannie Boone** (widow of the late Mr. James D. Boone) died at her home near Conway, on April 20, 1911. She leaves three children, several grandchildren, and a large number of friends to mourn their loss. At her death she was in her sixty-seventh year. Hers was a quiet Christian life. Those who knew her greatly loved her. She was a faithful member of Conway Baptist Church and the Woman's Missionary Society. She was very careful to remember her church and her society even when she was not permitted to be present. There be it resolved—

1. That while we deeply regret our loss, we believe that her entrance into another life is great gain for her and we bow in humble submission to God's will.

2. That in her death the community has lost a good neighbor; the children, a faithful mother; and the Missionary Society, one of its faithful members.
3. That we, the Society, extend to the bereaved ones our deepest sympathies and try to comfort them by the thoughts that she is at rest and some day there will be a reunion in heaven.
4. That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, one to the Recorder, and one to the Chowan Times for publication.

Fannie A. Boone (born 1845) donated a marble top table to Conway Baptist Church when the first church was built to be used in the foyer. When the new brick church was completed this table was no longer needed. The church decided to give the table to a member of Fannie's family who was still a member of Conway Baptist Church. Judith Vinson Davis, a granddaughter of Fannie, was the only remaining member so the table was given to her. The table is now owned by Mary Davis Drake, daughter of Judith V. Davis and great granddaughter of Fannie A. Boone. Fannie's great grandson, Billy Vinson Davis, has always attended Conway Baptist Church and he, his wife, his son, Phillip Vinson Davis and family, are members.

Mary Davis Drake

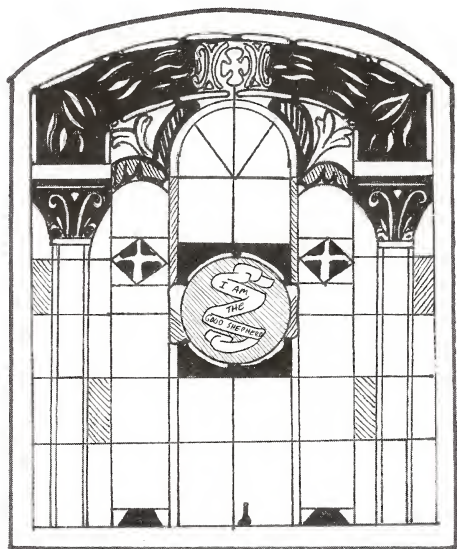
Ransom Kelly White was born May 12, 1893, son of **Rufus T.** and **Mariah E. White**. He was ordained at Conway Baptist Church on July 17, 1917. Dr. White was educated at Buies Creek Academy, Wake Forest College, and received the Th.M degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1920 and the Th.D in 1922. He married Vesta Charles Benthall in 1918. He served as pastor of many churches, President of Belmont College in Nashville, Tennessee, and served on many boards and committees for N. C. Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Convention. Dr. White traveled in Europe, South America, Africa and Canada. His death at age 85 was in 1979.

Paul S. Sykes, born March 17, 1894, son of **John Alfred Sykes** and **Mrs. Martha Indiana Carter Sykes**, was 11 years old when he transferred his membership to Conway Baptist Church in 1905. He was also ordained here on July 17, 1917. It is reported that he went into the business field. He was expelled from Conway Baptist Church in April, 1922, for being delinquent in his dues assessment. He had moved away and later reported that he had sent the money but it was never received by the church. Mr. Sykes rejoined our church in the late 70's or early 80's. He was the last living charter member until his death on April 1, 1984, at the age of 90.

May the God of peace who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen (Hebrews 13:20)

Chapter 20

PASTORS



The Good Shepherd

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (John 10:11)

Rev. Charles Wesley Scarborough (1847 – 1922)



Rev. Scarborough was not actually one of our pastors. However he has been included here because he was instrumental in the organization of our church. Rev. Charles Wesley Scarborough was born on January 29, 1847, the son of Daniel and Cynthia Horton Scarborough. He was one of a family of eight children (four sons and four daughters). He served during the Civil War and was the youngest of four brothers who served with the Army of Northern Virginia until the surrender at Appomattox.

Following the Civil War he worked on the farm with his father and eventually entered and graduated from Wake Forest College in 1877.

He was an instructor at Wake Forest for a short time and preached in Wake County until he went to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky. He then came to Chowan College in 1883 as a professor of English Literature and Moral Philosophy. For the rest of his life he lived in Murfreesboro with an exception of three years in Woodland.

During his life spent in eastern North Carolina and West Chowan Baptist Association, he served as pastor of Baptist churches for nearly forty years. Those churches included Jackson, Elam, Sandy Run, Roberts Chapel, Buckhorn, Mt. Tabor, Woodland, Aulander, Hebron, Menola and Pleasant Grove. At Roberts Chapel and Buckhorn he held a consecutive pastorate for nearly a quarter of a century.

Following the organization of Conway Baptist Church on October 9, 1905, the church extended a call to Rev. Scarborough to become our first pastor. He declined but served until one could be obtained. He was very influential in getting the church organized and off to a good beginning. He also served here as interim pastor several times.

He was thrice married, to Annie Waitt, Mattie Saltzman, and Anna Eldridge. Paul Scarborough, a son of his first marriage, was his only son to survive him. Rev. Scarborough also had two grandsons, Paul Scarborough, Jr., and Charles W. Scarborough, Jr.

In the last year of his life he moved to Franklin, Virginia, to be with his son and it was there he died on December 1, 1922. Funeral services were conducted at Franklin Baptist Church with interment in the family plot at Riverside Cemetery in Murfreesboro.

Rev. Jesse McCarter (1876 – 1965)

Conway Baptist Church, February, 1906 – November, 1906

Rev. Jesse McCarter began his ministry at the age of 30 in February, 1906, just out of Wake Forest College. He served only nine months, but during that time he and the members were making plans to build a church in which the members could worship.

Rev. McCarter was born on December 19, 1876. He was ordained at Glen Royal in Wake Forest, N. C., on January 20, 1905. He served as our first pastor from February until November in 1906. Rev. McCarter died in 1965.

Rev. W. B. Waff (1852 – 1933)

Conway Baptist Church, 1907 – December, 1914



Rev. William Benberry Waff, son of Joseph and Elizabeth Waff, was born in Chowan County, North Carolina, on November 13, 1852. He attended school in Edenton before entering Reynoldson Male Institute at Reynoldson, North Carolina. After graduating from Reynoldson and prior to entering Wake Forest College, Rev. Waff taught one year in Virginia. He graduated from Wake Forest in 1880. Upon graduation Rev. Waff began a career as a teacher and

educator. He taught school for three years in Davidson County, North Carolina, and in Washington, North Carolina. While teaching in Washington, he met and married Willie LeGrand Traynham on December 21, 1882, and it is reported “for fifty years they walked together in happy wedlock and faithful service in the Master’s Kingdom.” Soon after marrying, the Waff’s moved to Reynoldson where Rev. Waff taught with his brother, Thomas E. Waff, at Reynoldson Institute. In 1887 Rev. William B. Waff purchased and operated Reynoldson Institute until 1905. At that time he sold it to Gates County for use as a public school. In 1884, a year after Rev. Waff’s return to the Reynoldson Community, he was elected pastor of Reynoldson. He served as pastor of Reynoldson for twenty-three years, and later Gatesville, Ariel, Cool Spring, Beulah, Middle Swamp, Ballard’s Bridge and Great Fork churches.

In January, 1907, Rev. Waff and his family moved to Murfreesboro, North Carolina, where he served as pastor of Meherrin, Conway, Severn and Margarettsville churches. He served at Conway Baptist from 1907 until December, 1914. During his first year, the first church was built. Eight years later he moved and served at Jonesboro, then Pittsboro. In 1922 he moved to Mocksville and served as full-time pastor for ten years.

During his career as a minister, he baptized nearly 1,500 professing Christians! In the fields of his endeavor he was eminently successful. Wherever he served, by his noble character, his real ability, his diligent and self-sacrificing labor, he won the love and esteem not only of his own immediate charges but of the communities in which he lived and labored.

Rev. and Mrs. Waff had three daughters (Mrs. J. B. Whitley, Mrs. Wiley Stone and Mrs. John A. Northcott) and a son (C. Manley Waff).

He returned to reside in Winton, North Carolina, in December, 1931. He died on January 11, 1933, and was buried in the Reynoldson Church Cemetery.

In an article appearing in the *Biblical Recorder* written of W. B. Waff by Rev. J. T. Byrum were these thoughts: "His long day's work is finished. Death came to him as it should come to all—not as an enemy, but as a friend; not as a defeat, but as a victory; not as an end, but the beginning of that which is highest and best; not in the guise of a serpent, but in the form of an angel who quietly stopped his weary heart and kissed away the gloom of the dark valley and took him up in heaven's chariot to dwell with the ransomed host of God in the Father's House on high in the realm of eternal day."

Rev. Jesse Blalock (1879 – 1966)

Conway Baptist Church, February, 1919 – October, 1924



Rev. Jesse Blalock was born in Mitchell County on December 15, 1879 (the youngest of fifteen children), to Rev. John Blalock and wife, Susan Young Blalock. He was a veteran of the U. S. Army, having served in the Philippines from 1903 to 1907. He was a graduate of Mars Hill College and Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, where he received his degree in 1918. He married Cora Lee Young of Yancey County in 1908, and of the union there were four children (Lloyd Vance Blalock and Mrs. Lela Wilson and John and Truett, the two who died in infancy and are buried in Severn, N. C.). Rev. Blalock was ordained at Brown's Creek Church in Yancey County in 1911. He served Conway, Severn and Margarettsville Baptist churches from February, 1919, until October, 1924. He was forty years of age when he became our pastor. Rev. Blalock resigned to resume his studies at the Seminary.

Rev. Blalock's pastorates include Conway, Margarettsville, Roanoke Rapids, Severn, Rowland, Rich Square, Lillington, Aberdeen, Valdese and Pleasant Ridge Church. He was retired at the time of his death but had been supplying at some of the churches. He was a member of Pleasant Ridge Church and was living in Shelby, N. C., at the time of his death on August 25, 1966, after a long illness.

Rev. John William Downey (1874 – 1927)

Conway Baptist Church, February, 1919 – 1924

Rev. John William Downey (born in 1874) was the son of a Granville County farmer, R. W. Downey, and lived near Virgilina, Virginia. Amis Chapel was his home church, and where, as a youth, he found the Lord. He attended school at Bethel Hill Academy and Scottsburg Normal College, Va. He also attended Louisville Seminary for two years while preaching at nearby churches to defray his expenses.

His fields were North Henderson, East Durham, Calvary Church, Portsmouth, Va., Woodland, Severn and Sawyer's Creek. In each he rendered valuable and faithful service. His wife, Dollie Collins Downey, shared with him the joys, successes and responsibilities of his labors. Three children were given to the home: R. Pendleton, who became a minister; Ann Elizabeth, who attended Chowan; and John W., Jr., who worked with the Thomasville Orphanage.

As Conway, Severn and Margarettsville Baptist churches were in the same field, Rev. J. W. Downey served as pastor of all three churches. His son, R. Pendleton Downey attended Wake Forest College and Baptist Seminary in Louisville. He was ordained at Severn Baptist Church while Rev. A. W. H. Jones was serving as pastor around 1925. R. Pendleton Downey married Evelyn White (Jay Porter's sister) from Severn. He served as pastor of Salem Baptist Church for more than twenty-seven years.

During a great snowstorm in 1927, Rev. Downey began walking to the post office at Belcross. On the way he was taken into a car by neighbors. He remarked that he did not realize how difficult it was to walk in the deep snow. Almost instantly he collapsed and died at the age of 52. He was taken to Amis Chapel for burial.



Rev. A. W. H. Jones

Conway Baptist Church, 1925 – December 31, 1930

Rev. A. W. H. Jones began his ministry in Conway in 1925. He also served Severn and Margarettsville churches and resided in Severn. Rev. Jones resigned in December, 1930. At that time the church voted to withdraw from the Severn, Margarettsville field and to join Murfreesboro in forming a pastorate.

Dr. William Richard Burrell (1871 – 1946)

Conway Baptist Church, January, 1931 – 1934



Dr. William Richard Burrell, son of Lucy Timms and Charles Edward Burrell of England, was born in Ottawa, Canada, on September 1, 1871. He was ordained May 15, 1900. Dr. Burrell married Edith Sara Bowsfield of Canada on September 26, 1896. Their children were William Ernest, Reginald Oliver, Victory Gregory and Edith Beatrice. Dr. Burrell was a graduate of the Royal Military School of Canada, the University of Seattle, and McMaster University Divinity School. Dr. Burrell

authored several books (*From Out the Flame* and *Journal of Otherwise Men*) and numerous articles, especially on the Orient. Dr. Burrell was extended a call to pastor Murfreesboro Baptist Church. He moved to Murfreesboro from Monroe, N. C., and gave his first sermon on May 10, 1925. At that time he was employed jointly by the church and Chowan College, serving the college as Professor of Religious Instruction and New Testament Greek. In 1925-1926 he served as Acting President of the college, following the illness of C. P. Weaver.

Dr. Burrell became our pastor in January, 1931, at age 63 and served here until 1934. The later years of his ministry were spent in Asheville and Williamston, prior to his retirement in Lake Worth, Florida.

Dr. Jesse Coleman Owen (1870-1955)

Conway Baptist Church, 1934 – 1935



Dr. Jesse Coleman Owen was the son of John and Melinda Reid Owen. He was born in Balsam Grove in Transylvania County on May 26, 1870. While still a high school student, he held his first pastorate in Glenville. He was a graduate of old Judson College in Hendersonville and of Wake Forest College. As a student at Wake Forest, he served as pastor of the East Durham Church. Dr. J. C. Owen came to Conway with a wealth of experience. He was sent to China in 1899 as an assistant to Miss Lottie Moon, pioneer missionary. While in

China, Dr. Owen began the first Protestant orphanage for boys of North

China. There were no funds available, but thankfully, as these boys developed into splendid Christians who did much to spread the gospel, funds began flowing toward this work.

While in China, he met Rebecca Miller, a fellow missionary, whom he married in 1900. Few brides have their wedding dinner served aboard a battleship but add to that the even more unusual fact that the bridegroom was not even present. He was busy rescuing the boys at the orphanage, whose lives were endangered because of the Boxer Rebellion. When floods had washed away whole villages and thousands were left homeless, Dr. Owen volunteered to work at the heart-rending task of famine relief. This took its toll of his strength. He denied himself the necessary food to give to the starving and consequently contracted famine fever. He never fully recovered from this, and had to return to the States in 1911. His health was poor; his desire to serve his Maker was great; the need was urgent. He preached at every opportunity, often being carried to services, where he sat to preach. He helped all those who came, some even to his bedside, to find Jesus.

Although poor health prohibited Dr. Owen from being a pastor to larger churches, he found smaller churches to be where his strength was sufficient. He served as pastor at Conway Baptist for one and one-half years, beginning his pastorate in 1934 at the age of 64. He put his whole soul into his work, and we were one of these who were fortunate to be served by him and his wife. Dr. Owen resigned in 1935 to work in the western part of North Carolina. He served his denomination for 65 years as a missionary to China, evangelist, secretary to the State Mission Board of New Mexico, president of the Florida Baptist Institute, professor of Bible at Chowan College, missionary to the Navajo Indians and as pastor of churches in North Carolina, Missouri, Mississippi, South Carolina and Washington.

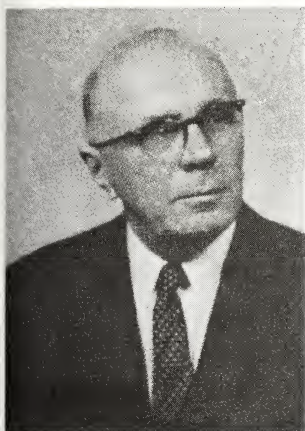
Dr. Owen was the author of several books, including *The Romance of Soul-Winning*, *The Old Story of Tsin* and *Southern Mountaineers*. In his retirement, not willing to be inactive and whenever his strength permitted, he held meetings, taught study courses, or preached where people were glad to listen to an "old man" with rich experiences.

Dr. and Mrs. Owen had four daughters (Mrs. W. T. Smith, Mrs. W.G. Rodgers, Mrs. Forrest Burks, Mrs. L. W. Meachum) and a son (James C. Owen of Dhahran).

It was written in his obituary in 1955, "The lives he has enriched and the souls he has led to Christ are legion. Truly it may be said of Dr. Owen that he, like the Master, went about doing good."

Dr. John Henry Bunn (1890-1977)

Conway Baptist Church, June, 1935 – April, 1941



Dr. John Henry Bunn served in our church while he taught Bible at Chowan College. He also served as pastor of Murfreesboro Baptist Church. Dr. Bunn was a graduate of Wake Forest University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Chowan College. He and his family resided in Murfreesboro. He often brought his wife, son (John) and daughter (Elizabeth) to the services in Conway. Elizabeth had the distinction of being one of the first coeds admitted to Wake Forest College, which had

been previously an all male college. Ordained in 1908, he preached for 60 years and served in many North Carolina and Virginia churches. He held several leadership positions in the N. C. Baptist State Convention and the Virginia Baptist General Association, was moderator of the Atlantic Baptist Association and past president of Yates Baptist Ministerial Association. Dr. Bunn died at age 87 in 1977.

Rev. Lonnie Sasser (1889 – 1972)

Conway Baptist Church, May, 1941 – 1961



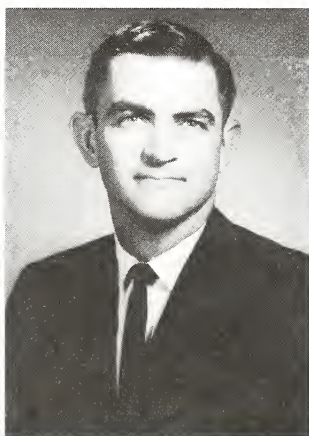
Serving his Lord faithfully for many years, Rev. Lonnie Sasser prepared for his ministry by attending Wake Forest College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was ordained by Manley's Chapel Baptist Church (Moore County) on May 26, 1912. He began his ministry at Conway Baptist Church in May, 1941. At the time he also served Mt. Tabor Baptist Church and Earleys Church. He served as our pastor for twenty years. Under his leadership the church experienced tremendous growth, including the purchase of a lot and the building of a parsonage. Rev. Sasser was a man of God, preaching, teaching, and leading the churches into a deeper spiritual life, winning many people to Christ.

Rev. Sasser resigned as pastor of Conway Baptist Church in 1961. He continued to preach and to do the Lord's work. He was very diplomat-

ic, loyal to his churches and active in the West Chowan Association. He was devoted to his wife (Minnie Rose), daughter (Mary) and grandson (Lonnie Sasser Smith). Rev. Sasser, ordained in 1912, and upon his death in 1972, lacked only a few days of having served 60 years as an ordained minister. He spent the last 44 years of his ministry in the West Chowan Baptist Association. Rev. Sasser was 83 at the time of his death. Funeral services were held in Murfreesboro Baptist Church with burial in Riverside Cemetery in Murfreesboro. His wife preceded him in death the previous year.

Dr. Donald Jordan Dunlap (1932)

Conway Baptist Church, July 9, 1961 – February 13, 1966



Dr. Donald J. Dunlap was born December 14, 1932, to Lilburn and Elizabeth Hawley Dunlap and lived with his family in Christiansburg, Virginia. He had an older sister, Bettie, and a twin sister, Louise, both now deceased, and has a brother, Lilburn, a retired musician, who is currently living with Dr. and Mrs. Dunlap in Christiansburg, Virginia. Dr. Dunlap is a graduate of Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia, and Andover Newton Theological School in Newton Centre, Massachusetts. He also graduated from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, in 1982, earning the Doctor of Ministry degree. After serving as associate minister of Franklin Baptist Church in Franklin, Virginia, he completed a year of postgraduate study at New College, the University of Edinburgh, in Scotland. While studying in Scotland, he was able to travel in Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Syria, Greece and Turkey, visiting Christian sites in those countries. His travels also included most countries of Western Europe, and he spent two weeks in the Soviet Union. He returned to the states a year before he was called to Conway Baptist Church. Eight years later, in the summer of 1968, Dr. Dunlap made a second trip to Western Europe, taking a group of young people to the seventh Baptist World Youth Conference held in Berne, Switzerland. Seven countries were included on the itinerary.

Dr. Donald Jordan Dunlap became the first full-time pastor of Conway Baptist Church in August, 1961, and was the first to occupy the new parsonage. He was 28 years of age and a bachelor at the time. Many changes were made during his ministry here as we moved forward to

becoming a full-time church. It is with fondness and respect that we remember his time with us.

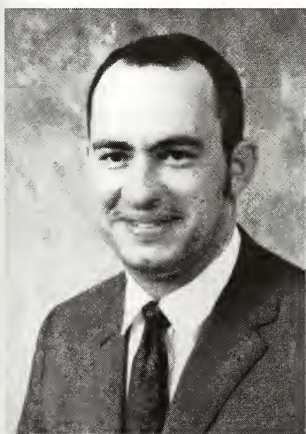
In 1966 Dr. Dunlap resigned to accept a position at West End Baptist Church in Suffolk, Virginia. He was kind, gentle, patient, understanding and supportive in all phases of church service. We followed his ministry at West End Baptist Church, then Freemason Street Baptist Church in downtown Norfolk, Virginia. We have been concerned that he has had health problems recently, but he faithfully continues to do the Lord's work.

Dr. and Mrs. Dunlap have been blessed with two daughters, Laura and Rebecca, and three grandchildren. The Dunlaps have retired and are living in his home place in Christiansburg, Virginia, which they are renovating. Dr. Dunlap has done some interim work, and Mrs. Dunlap is tutoring English at the present time.

On June 28, 2004, Dr. and Mrs. Dunlap celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary with a surprise reception given by their children.

Rev. Russell L. Wimmer (1938)

Conway Baptist Church, June, 1966 – January 19, 1969



Rev. Russell L. Wimmer, a native of Salem, Virginia, was born in 1938 to Howard and Josephine Wimmer. Rev. Wimmer lost his father in 2000. He, his wife (Dot) and son (Steve) came to us from the Branchville Baptist Church. He is a graduate of North Greenville College, Carson-Newman College and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He began his ministry the third Sunday in June, 1966. Rev. Wimmer was friendly and well liked. Throughout his ministry here he promoted communication, growth, stewardship, spiritual growth and flexibility in the ways the church was willing to do things. He left Conway Baptist Church in 1969 to pastor Immanuel Baptist Church in Durham where he ministered until 1982. Later he served at Northwest Baptist Church, Rural Hall Baptist Church, and Northeast Baptist Church of Atlanta (which is actually in Doraville, Ga.). In the meantime he has done further study of pastoral care at Baptist Hospital, Duke University Medical Center and Southeastern. He has been director of the Durham County Unit for the American Cancer Society, a volunteer counselor with Contact and co-host for a weekly cable television program on religious news.

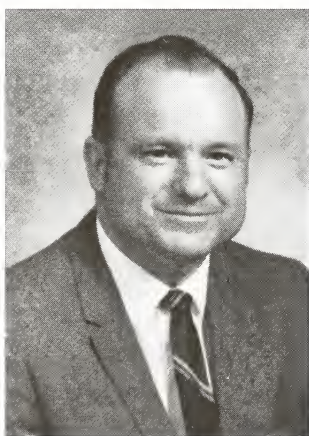
Rev. Wimmer also studied and became an Intentional Interim Pastor. This degree qualified him to serve a church with special needs. He pastored two churches under this program from 1999-2003: Gates Baptist Church and Mt. Herman Baptist Church, both in Durham.

Rev. and Mrs. Wimmer had one son, Steve, at the time they were with us. Steve Wimmer is now married and is the father of seven children, all under the age of twelve. His first five children are boys. The girls' ages are two and six months. Steve is a funeral director and lives with his family in Duluth, Georgia. After they left Conway, Rev. and Mrs. Wimmer had a daughter, Kristen, born in 1970. She is now married (Kristen Wimmer Horne), lives in Winston Salem and has two boys.

Rev. and Mrs. Wimmer, now officially retired, are living in Rock Hill, South Carolina. He continues to do the Lord's work as an interim pastor for a Presbyterian church. He plans to continue this ministry as both he and the church are happy with the arrangement.

Rev. Walter Sawyer Jones, Sr. (1929)

Conway Baptist Church, June 1, 1969 – August 31, 1977



Rev. Walter S. Jones was born in Pasquotank County on December 7, 1929. He grew up in Deep Creek, Va. (now Chesapeake, Va.). He married Lorraine P. Troyer on April 3, 1953. They have two sons Walter Jones, Jr. (an electronics engineer), and Rev. Douglas Clay Jones (director of Alumni Relations and Special Events at Campbell University). Rev. Walter Jones earned an associate's degree from Campbell College in 1954. He received a bachelor's degree from Wake Forest University and attended Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and University of Richmond. He has been a pastor since 1957 and has served churches throughout North Carolina and Virginia. He has worked with the Stewardship Department of the N. C. Baptist State Convention. He participated in 200 revivals and world mission conferences and was evangelism chairman for Columbus County when the Billy Graham Crusade came to the county in 1994.

Rev. Jones served as pastor of the following churches: Riverview Baptist, Washington, N. C.; DeBaun Memorial Baptist, Norfolk, Va.; Cedar Fork Baptist, Beulaville, N. C.; Calvary Baptist, Jacksonville, N. C. and Conway Baptist Church. In 1998 Rev. and Mrs. Walter S. Jones endowed

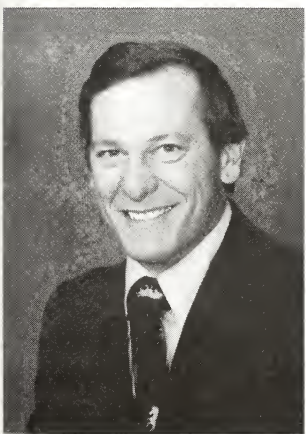
the Walter Sawyer Jones, Sr. and Lorraine P. Jones Divinity School Scholarship at Campbell University for students from any church at which Rev. Jones served as pastor.

During their years of ministry, Lorraine P. Jones also had many denominational responsibilities. Apart from numerous duties as WMU Director, Sunbeam Director and secretary of the Ministers' Wives Organization for the New River Association, she has led two retreats for ministers' wives to Sao Paulo, Brazil. She also led leadership conferences for N. C. Baptist Mission Development at Fort Caswell and Ridgecrest.

Rev. Jones resigned his pastorate at Conway Baptist in 1977 upon acceptance of the position of Director of Missions in the Columbus Baptist Association. He retired from this position in 1995 and is currently living in Whiteville, N.C. He continues to serve the Lord as an interim pastor. He has held six interims since his retirement and is currently serving First Baptist Church in Shallotte, N. C. The call to missions continues to be close to his heart as over the years he has led eight mission trips to Brazil. He also answered the call of the Home Mission Board to preach revivals in several Home Mission Cities.

Rev. Jess Willard Crosswhite, Jr. (1946)

Conway Baptist Church, November 6, 1977 – January 21, 1979



Rev. Jess Willard (Tommy) Crosswhite (son of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Crosswhite, Sr.) was born January 14, 1946, in Roanoke, Virginia. He graduated from high school in 1964, attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute, and graduated from National Business College in June, 1968, with a degree in Junior Accounting. He attended Virginia Western Community College and graduated from Carson Newman College, in August, 1975, with a B.A. Degree in Religion. He received his Master of Divinity Degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary,

Wake Forest, N.C. in July, 1977. He dedicated his life to the Lord in 1969 and was ordained as a deacon in 1971. He was licensed to preach by Bethel Church of Salem, Virginia, on September 6, 1973. While in college he served as interim pastor for the Fairview Baptist Church in Watauga, Tenn. He served as pastor of Sulpher Springs Baptist Church in Warrenton from May, 1975, until 1977 when he became our pastor.

He began his ministry with us on November 6, 1977. Rev. and Mrs.

Crosswhite (the former Anne Renee Pratt) had two children (Michael Todd, age 8, and Kristie Lynn, age 4) and were blessed with a third (Brian) while serving our church. He served here for one year.

Rev. Crosswhite's resignation became effective January 21, 1979. He accepted a position with a company in Tennessee.

Rev. James E. Hester (1932)

Conway Baptist Church, August, 1979 – January, 1997



Rev. James E. Hester was born in Bladenboro in 1932 to Molly and James Hester. He attended the public schools in Bladen County, graduating in 1950. He did his undergraduate work at Pembroke State University where he received a bachelor of arts degree in history. Rev. Hester's undergraduate seminary work was done at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary at Wake Forest with graduate studies at Luther Rice Seminary in Jacksonville, Florida, where he received his ThM Degree. Married to the former Mercile Pait

(also of Bladen County), Rev. Hester and his wife have three children. At this time, their oldest son, Darryll, is pastor of Rocky Point Baptist Church in Rocky Point, N.C. Their daughter, Pamela, teaches music at Nance Elementary School in Wake County. She also serves as pianist at Longview Baptist Church in Raleigh and has a music studio in her home in Garner. Their son, Tim, is employed as a computer technician at East Carolina Medical School in Greenville, N. C. Tim is a deacon at Oakmont Baptist Church in Greenville.

Rev. Hester was employed with Carolina Power and Light Company in Lumberton when he answered God's call to the ministry. He was ordained at Center Roads Baptist Church on September 2, 1952.

He began his pastorate at Cross Creek Mission (sponsored by Second Baptist Church) in Fayetteville. After serving at the church for three and one half years, Rev. Hester went to Spring Lake to serve Central Baptist Church. This was primarily a military family church. While serving there he helped the church build an office complex, a narthex to the front of the church, an educational building and fellowship hall.

Rev. Hester served as President of the Pastors Conference, Chairman of the Missions Committee, Chairman of Evangelism Committee and other committees in the New South River Association. He

then accepted a call to pastor Carroll Memorial Baptist Church in Fayetteville, N. C. During his seven year tenure there he helped the church build an educational building and a new sanctuary.

When his ministry was completed there, Rev. Hester moved to the First Baptist Church in Maxton where he served for two years. While there he helped the church complete extensive renovations to the sanctuary and a new fellowship hall with offices and classrooms. While serving in Maxton, Rev. Hester organized the Parent-Teacher Association for the Maxton City Schools and was very active in the schools. He also was active in the Robeson Baptist Association and served on the Evangelism Committee and the Pastors Conference.

Rev. Hester, his wife (Mercile) and youngest son (Tim) moved into the readied parsonage and became our pastor in August, 1979. He served the Lord here at Conway Baptist for over seventeen years. Rev. Hester retired on January 1, 1997. Since that time he has continued to serve the Lord faithfully as an interim, supply and revival pastor in many area churches. Almost every Sunday, he is found in a pulpit preaching the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Willie Atlas McLawhorn (1948)

Conway Baptist Church, April, 1998 – Present)



Rev. Willie A. McLawhorn, the oldest of seven children, was born in Orlando, Florida, on November 1, 1948, to H. M. and Martha McLawhorn. In 1951 his family moved to Norfolk, Virginia, where they lived until 1959 when they moved to Roxobel, N. C. He graduated from Bertie High School in 1966, then went to Florida to a technical school. Upon completion of a year of training, he worked for IBM at Cape Canaveral where he worked on the first Saturn V rockets.

In 1968 he enlisted in the United States Air Force and was trained as a voice intercept specialist with emphasis in Russian language. He served in Germany and Japan during his four years of service. Upon returning to Roxobel following military service, Rev. McLawhorn worked for Roxobel Garment Company for several years. During some of these years he attended Sandy Run Baptist Church and served as a deacon. In the fall of 1974 he answered God's call to full-time ministry. He enrolled at Chowan College in the spring of 1975 and grad-

uated Summa Cum Laude in 1976 with an Associate Degree. The next two years were spent at Gardner Webb University where he graduated Cum Laude in 1978 with a Bachelor's Degree. He graduated from Southern Theological Seminary in 1982 with a Master of Divinity Degree.

His first pastorate was at Lasker Baptist Church in Lasker, N. C., where he was ordained on October 11, 1981. He served as a bi-vocational pastor from October, 1981, through August, 1986. His experience there enabled him to learn much about people, their needs and how he could minister to them. His daughter, Melanie, was born while serving that church.

In September, 1986, he answered the call of Western Prong Baptist Church of Whiteville, N. C., to be their pastor. During his ministry at Western Prong he became more involved with association work through the Columbus Baptist Association. He served at various times on the Sunday School Assist Team, Committee on Committees, Vice-Moderator, and Moderator, as well as president of the Columbus Baptist Minister's Conference. He was appointed to serve on the Columbus County AIDS Task Force, and worked with the Optimist Club of Whiteville. His son, Will, was born while serving at Western Prong. Highlights of his ministry at Western Prong included the addition of an elevator, the start of a new Sunday School Class, and helping the church finance a mission trip that allowed him to go to Brazil.

In April, 1998, Rev. McLawhorn became pastor of Conway Baptist Church. His wife, the former Diane Barnes of Roxobel, is a nurse and has been a tremendous helpmate during his school days as well as his years of ministry. As of this year Melanie graduated from college and is now working in the paralegal field. Will has completed his high school education and plans to enter college and study criminal justice and eventually to enter law enforcement.

Rev. McLawhorn's service to our Lord continues into the next 100 years of Conway Baptist Church history.

Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment.” (Matthew 22:37-38)

Chapter 21

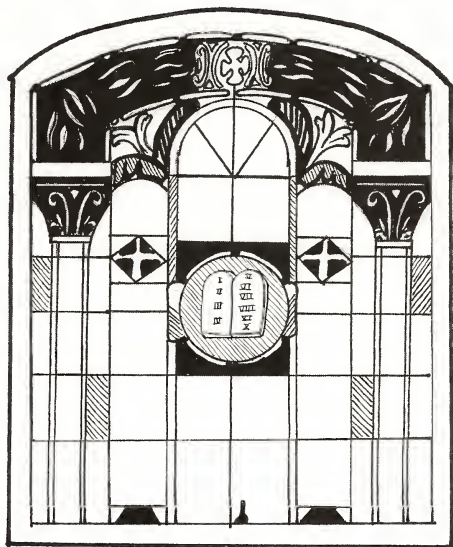
CONSTITUTION

BYLAWS

And

CHURCH

COVENANT



Ten Commandments

CONSTITUTION OF CONWAY BAPTIST CHURCH

Conway, North Carolina

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Conway Baptist Church, having been led as we believe, by the Spirit of God and for the purpose of preserving the principles of our Christian faith to the end that this church may be governed in an orderly manner, and to set forth the relationship of this body to other Baptist bodies, do adopt and establish this constitution.

I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be Conway Baptist Church of Conway, North Carolina.

II. PURPOSE

The Conway Baptist Church is an autonomous ecclesiastical body organized for the purpose of advancing and promoting the worship of God through the reading and study of the Holy Bible as the inspired and revealed word of God, the teaching and preaching of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and for the winning of souls to Jesus Christ. This church shall be missionary in spirit, extending the Gospel through our organized religious channels to the entire world. In order to accomplish these purposes, the church will have full power and authority to purchase, lease and acquire by gift, devise or bequest and to hold, mortgage, convey and dispose of all kinds of property, both real and personal, provided that the title to all property shall be vested in the church trustees.

III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the Baptist Faith and message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963. We band ourselves together as a body of Baptist believers in Jesus Christ, personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

IV. CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and his assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ. We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion; to educate our children religiously; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings; faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offence, but always ready for reconciliation and, mindful of the rules of our Savior, to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of the covenant and the principles of God's word.

V. CHARACTER

Section 1. Polity

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the association and state convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 2. Doctrine

This church receives the scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practices. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of other Baptist churches as indicated in the articles of faith herewith.

BYLAWS

VI. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. **Candidacy**

No person shall be admitted to membership in this church who has not been immersed in water upon a profession of repentance towards God; and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who has been received into membership by vote of the church. Should immersion be impossible because of one's health and upon his request, and a favorable vote by the church, such a one may be admitted to membership through baptism by affusion.

All members of other Baptist churches who wish to become members of our body may do so by regular letters of dismission and upon a vote of the church.

Section 2. **Dismission**

Members about to remove from us shall, upon application, receive a letter of dismission to join a church of like faith and order, at any regular meeting of the church on the Lord's day.

Section 3. **Termination of Membership**

The church, after due notice and opportunity for hearing, and every possible kindly effort to make such action unnecessary, may upon majority of vote, terminate the membership of a person in this body for reasons it considers sufficient to warrant such actions.

VII. CHURCH OFFICERS

Section 1.

The officers of this church shall be a pastor, twelve deacons, nine trustees, a clerk, a treasurer and any other officers the church may deem necessary.

Section 2. **Pastor**

The pastor is responsible for leading the church in functioning as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff in performing their tasks. A major concern of the pastor is to perform pastoral responsibilities. The pastor is the leader of worship, proclamation, education, and pastoral ministry. The pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice shall be given.

When a vacancy occurs in the pastorate, the church shall immediately elect a pulpit committee of five members, two of whom shall be deacons serving on the current board, to recommend some minister as pastor. In his election a three-fourths affirmative vote of all members present shall be necessary. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. In either case, 30 days notice shall be given in termination of such relationship.

Section 3. **Church Staff**

This church shall call or employ such staff members as the church shall need. A job description shall be written when the need for staff members is determined. Vocational staff members other than the pastor shall be recommended to the church by the

trustees and employed by church action. The secretaries and custodians shall be hired by the trustees.

Section 4. Minister of Music

The minister of music shall be charged with responsibility to provide worshipful music for all services and departments of the church, and shall have general oversight and direction of the music. He/she is to direct the choir in practices and public singing, and is to cooperate with the pastor and other leaders in the selection of suitable music and the devising of appropriate music programs for all occasions where such services are needed.

Section 5. Deacons

The Board of Deacons shall be composed of twelve members of this church, of either sex. Each year the church will elect four members to serve a three year term. After serving a term of three years, no member of the Board of Deacons shall be eligible for re-election until the lapse of at least one year. In the selection of deacons, the nominating committee shall recommend to the church a name for each vacancy to be filled. This, however, shall not mean that other nominations may not be made by any member of the church.

Section 6. Trustees

There shall be nine trustees, one-third of whom shall be elected annually to serve for three years. They shall hold in trust the property of the church for the benefit of the church and shall have the care and custody of the physical property thereof. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, or purchase or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required. The trustees shall appoint the salaried employees of the church and said employees shall be responsible to the Board of Trustees, and shall operate under the supervision of the pastor. The trustees, in cooperation with various church committees and groups, shall annually prepare and submit to the church a recommended budget, itemizing the amounts needed and sought for all local and worldwide expenses. The chairman and/or vice-chairman of the Board of Trustees shall sign all checks. In the selection of trustees, the nominating committee shall recommend to the church a name for each vacancy to be filled. This, however, shall not mean that other nominations may not be made by any member of the church.

Section 7. Moderator

The moderator shall be the pastor. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the vice-chairman of the deacons shall preside.

Section 8. Clerk

The church clerk shall be elected annually and shall have charge of all papers, books, records of the church, making minutes of all business transacted by the church at its regular and special meetings. The clerk shall keep an accurate register of church members and forward all letters of dismissal granted and prepare the annual letter to the West Chowan Association. The clerk may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to the

church secretary. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office.

Section 9. Secretary-Treasurer

The secretary-treasurer shall be hired by the Board of Trustees, with check signing privileges. It shall be the duty of the secretary-treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out upon receipt of vouchers approved by the trustees, all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. Payment of bills for local work and expenses shall be remitted at least monthly by check, signed by the chairman or vice-chairman of the Board of Trustees and the secretary-treasurer. It shall be the duty of the secretary-treasurer to render to the church monthly and at the regular quarterly business meeting an itemized report of receipts and disbursements for the preceding month. Within thirty days after the end of each fiscal year, the secretary-treasurer shall render to the church an annual report showing the total amount of receipts and an itemized statement of all disbursements. All books, records, and accounts kept by the secretary shall be considered the property of the church. The books shall be open to inspection at all times by any member of the church.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the church, the same shall be delivered by the secretary-treasurer to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve it as part of the permanent records of the church. The secretary-treasurer shall upon the hiring of his/her successor, at the completion of his/her fiscal report, promptly deliver to the chairman of the trustees or a newly hired secretary, all books, records, and accounts in his/her hands pertaining or relating to in any manner the duties of the office he/she is relinquishing. He/she shall consider it a part of their responsibilities to promote in every way scriptural giving on the part of the entire membership of the church.

Section 10. Church Ushers

Every regular church usher shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The usher shall be led by a head usher also selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The ushers are to greet people as they enter and leave the church, seat people at the proper time, provide bulletins and/or other materials at the time of seating. The ushers will be attentive to the needs of the congregation and the pastor.

Section 11. Church Council

1. The primary function of the council shall be to recommend to the congregation suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate program plans recommended by the church officers, organizations, and committees; to recommend to the congregation the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to the program priorities; and to evaluate program achievements in terms of church goals and objectives.

2. The council, unless otherwise determined by vote of the church, shall have as regular members the pastor, minister of education, minister of music, Sunday school director, woman's missionary union director, brotherhood director, chairman of deacons, and chairman of trustees. Committee chairmen and church-elected officers shall serve as ex-officio members.

3. All matters agreed upon by the council, calling for action not already provided for, shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

Section 12. Parliamentary

The church shall elect annually a parliamentarian. He/she shall assure that the business of this body is conducted in such a manner so as to maintain order, determine the will of the majority and insure the rights of the minority. *Roberts Revised Rules of Order* shall be used as reference, in all cases, recognizing the Holy Bible as final authority. A copy of *Roberts Revised Rules of Order* shall be in the hands of the parliamentarian at all business meetings.

VIII. CHURCH COMMITTEES

Section 1. General

All church committee members shall be members of the church and shall be nominated by the nominating committee and elected by the church. Church committees are responsible directly to the church; however, all recommendations to the church will be coordinated with the church council. Similarly, if any committee recommendation and/or motion affects another committee, organization or church officers, coordination must be solicited from the chairman of that committee, department head or church officer prior to soliciting church council coordination. The church may elect such committees as may be deemed necessary to carry on the various phases of the program of the church efficiently and effectively. These committees shall have the following duties:

Section 2. Baptism Committee

The baptism committee is elected to assist the pastor in preparing for the ordinance of baptism. The committee is responsible for preparing the candidates for the ordinance.

Section 3. Flower Committee

The flower committee is responsible for securing, arranging floral arrangements for the church services.

Section 4. History Committee

The history committee is to preserve and use the historical records of the church. The committee is especially concerned with gathering and preserving available church records, recording full and accurate records, and using the records to help members understand and appreciate their heritage and mission.

Section 5. Lord's Supper Committee

The Lord's Supper committee prepares the elements and the equipment for the observance of the Lord's Supper. The committee does the preparatory and maintenance work needed to observe the memorial service. The committee will prepare the elements on a schedule approved by the church.

Section 6. Nominating Committee

The nominating committee shall be a three-year rotating committee consisting of three members. It shall be the duty of this committee to bring to the church nominations

of officers and committees as provided for heretofore. This committee shall canvass the church rolls and otherwise seek to discover persons suitable for office-bearing, and tactfully obtain from members expression as to preference for persons to fill various offices. Members of this committee are in-eligible to serve as church officers during their term of office (ie: deacon-trustee). At the annual church conference, the vacancy created by the rotation of one member shall be filled by a nomination from the board of deacons and election by the church. Members rotating from this committee are ineligible to serve on a church board for one year. Nominations can still be made from the floor.

Section 7. Benevolence Committee

The benevolence committee is to perform acts of benevolence to persons in need in the name of Christ and His church. These needs may be physical, social, or mental. This is a deacon committee.

Section 8. Kitchen Committee

The kitchen committee is responsible for formulating policies of the kitchen and for communicating these policies to the church members.

Section 9. Counting Committee

This committee shall be composed of three members elected annually by the church. The counting committee is responsible for seeing that the amount of offering reported on the face of each offering envelope corresponds to the amount actually enclosed. Any discrepancy shall be noted on the envelope and initialed by the counter. A record shall be made of all loose offerings, and this recorded, together with the offering envelopes, shall be submitted to the church secretary-treasurer to be used in posting weekly offerings. This committee shall be responsible for depositing offerings in the overnight depository of First Citizens Bank, Conway, North Carolina, each Sunday after service.

Section 10. Library Committee

The library committee shall be composed of three members. This committee shall supervise the enlargement and operation of the church library and promote its use by the members.

Section 11. Youth Committee

The youth committee shall consist of at least six adult members of the church. It shall be the duty of the youth committee to study the church's program for the youth and to help organize all the older children, intermediates and young people of this church enrolled in the Sunday school and other organizations of the church and shall serve as advisors to the groups. It shall give attention to such special recreational and fellowship activities for older children, intermediates and young people as will make the church more meaningful to them and produce maximum spiritual growth.

IX. EDUCATIONAL MINISTERIES

Section 1. General

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church. It is understood that the pastor is an ex-officio officer of all the organizations named, and his leadership is to be recognized in them.

Section 2. Sunday School

There shall be a Sunday school, divided into departments and classes for all ages and conducted under the direction of a director, for the study of God's word. Sunday school is to be conducted each Sunday morning. The tasks of the Sunday school shall be to teach the biblical revelation; lead in reaching all prospects for the church, lead all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

Section 3. Department of Training

Should there be a department of training, it shall be divided into departments for all ages and conducted under the direction of a general director. Training is to be conducted each Sunday evening, or at such a time as specified by the church. The department of training shall serve as the training organization of the church. The tasks of the department of training shall be to teach systematic theology, Christian history, Christian ethics, and church polity and organizations; give orientation to new church members; train all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; train leaders for the church and denomination; discover, recruit and train potential leaders; provide for specialized training; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

Section 4. Woman's Missionary Union

There shall be a Woman's Missionary Union with such officers and such forms of organizations as needed. This program shall be directed by a director who shall be elected annually by the church. The tasks of the Woman's Missionary Union shall be to teach missions; lead persons to participate in missions; provide organization and leadership for special mission projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

Section 5. Brotherhood

There shall be a brotherhood, made up of such standard organizations as needed. This program shall be directed by a director who shall be elected by the church. The tasks of the brotherhood will be to teach missions; lead all men, young men, and boys to participate in mission activities; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

Section 6. Music Ministry

There shall be a music ministry under the direction of the minister of music. Such officers and organizations shall be included as needed. The music tasks shall be to teach music and hymnody; provide music and musicians for the congregational services and the organizations of the church; lead persons to participate in hymn singing, train persons to lead, sing and play music; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

X. CHURCH MEETING

Section 1. Worship Service

Regular meetings for worship, teaching, training and fellowship shall be held every Lord's day and upon other days designated by the pastor with concurrency by the board of deacons.

Section 2. Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper shall be observed the first Sunday of each quarter and at other times designated by the pastor.

Section 3. Regular Business Meetings

Meetings for the transaction of the business of the church shall be held on the second Sunday morning in January, April, July and September. The annual meeting shall be held the second Sunday morning in September.

Section 4. Special Business Meetings

The pastor and deacons shall jointly call special meetings when necessary, or when requested to do so in writing signed by ten adult members, and the notice of such special meetings shall be publicly given from the pulpit on the Lord's day preceding.

Section 5. Quorum

Twenty percent of the total church membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 6. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the church year which begins on October 1 and ends on September 30.

XI. CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1. Budget

The trustees in consultation with the church council, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and worldwide expenses.

Section 2. General

No staff member or committee shall promote or accept funds for any program not specifically approved by the church.

XII. ORDINANCES

Section 1. General

The ordinances of the church as set forth in the Holy Scriptures are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

XIII. LICENSING AND ORDAINING OF MINISTERS

Section 1. Licensing

Any member of the church who has shown by his life and has felt the call to the gospel ministry may by vote of the membership at a regular meeting be licensed by the church to the Christian ministry.

Section 2. Ordination

When a church of like faith and order shall have called as its pastor a member of this church who possesses scriptural qualifications for ordination to the work of the gospel ministry, and shall request in writing that he be ordained, this church shall consider such request. If the church,, by a vote of a majority of the members present, and voting at a regular meeting, approve such a request, then it shall authorize and direct the pastor to inform the associational ordaining committee who shall perform the ceremony of ordaining him to the gospel ministry in the name of and in the presence of the church.

XIV. AMENDMENTS

Changes in this constitution and bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided such amendments shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments to the constitution shall be by two-thirds vote of all members of the church present and voting; amendments the bylaws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the members present and voting.

This constitution takes precedence over any other constitution and bylaws heretofore adopted by the Conway Baptist Church of Conway, North Carolina. However, any such documents shall be retained for future historical records.

Respectively submitted: R. H. Johnson, Jr., Chairman
Lawrence Ricks, Vice Chairman
Sandra Vann
Brown Burgess

Adopted, July 17, 1983.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF CONWAY BAPTIST CHURCH A NONPROFIT CORPORATION

We, the undersigned natural persons of the age of eighteen or more, acting as incorporators for the purpose of creating a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of North Carolina, as contained in Chapter 55A of the General Statutes of North Carolina, entitled "Nonprofit Corporation Act", and the several amendments thereto, do hereby set forth:

Article I

The name of the corporation is Conway Baptist Church.

Article II

The period of duration of the corporation shall be perpetual.

Article III

A. The purpose for which this corporation is organized are to operate and function as a church in all its religious, charitable and educational dimensions including, but not limited to the following church's purposes:

1. To advance and promote the worship of God.
2. To engage in and promote the study of the Holy Scriptures.
3. To advance the gospel of Jesus Christ by preaching, evangelism, teaching and the administration of the ordinances of the church.
4. To create and enable Christian fellowship as a nurturing and discipling function of the church
5. To promote the Biblical principles of justice and righteousness in personal, social, community and national life.
6. To carry on the work of the church in all its spiritual, benevolent, educational, philanthropic, civil and social aspects and activities.
7. To promote the spiritual welfare of all persons and to disseminate the Word of God to the people of all nations through evangelistic, educational and charitable missions.
8. To organize and maintain such ministries and divisions, including but not limited to schools, day care centers, relief programs and social services and other programs authorized by law which will promote and advance the religious purposes set forth herein.

B. In furtherance of its purposes, and to the extent necessary to carry out such purposes, the corporation:

1. Shall have all the powers given to and possessed by a North Carolina Nonprofit Corporation Act.
2. May engage in any lawful activity within the purposes for which the corporation may be organized which are incidental to and in furtherance of the exempt purposes of the corporation.

C. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall insure to the benefit of, or be distributed to its members, trustees, officers or other private persons, except to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes as set forth in the Articles.

D. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under the Internal Revenue Code or by any corporation, contributions to which are deductible under the Internal Revenue Code.

Article IV

The government of this church shall be congregational in nature, and the final authority for the operation and management of the affairs of this corporation, spiritual and temporal, shall be vested in the membership of the corporation, which authority shall be exercised in the manner set forth in the by-laws. Members alone shall have the authority to adopt and amend by-laws, approve budgets, receive members and govern and conduct the affairs of this corporation.

Article V

The Corporation shall have one class of members as provided by the by-laws and all members shall be elected by the congregation in the manner set forth in the by-laws. All present members of the Church shall automatically become members of the corporation.

Article VI

The number of initial directors shall be twenty-one (21) and the initial directors and their terms shall be the same as the current deacons and trustees of the Conway Baptist Church, whose names and remaining terms are as follows:

James W. Martin	2 months	Wilson Bridgers	2 months
Jim Woodard	2 months	Lee Brittle	2 months
Mike Belch	14 months	Billy Joyner	14 months
Pearl Nelson	14 months	David Simmons	14 months
Russell H. Johnson, Jr.	26 months	C. J. Watson	26 months
J. D. Allen	26 months	Sandra Vann	26 months
Thomas W. Vinson	2 months	J. D. Simmons	2 months
Peggy Davis	2 months	Emmie Martin	14 months
Kelly Vann	14 months	Lee Duncan	14 months
Eddie Joyner	26 months	Linwood Coggins	26 months
R. J. White, III	26 months		

Article VII

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all the assets of the corporation exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such a manner or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code, as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed by the Superior Court of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

Article VIII

The address of the initial registered office of the corporation is: 209 Church Street, Conway, North Carolina 27820, and the initial registered agent of the corporation is Reverend James Hester.

Article IX

The names and addresses of the incorporators, acting as representatives of all the current members of Conway Baptist Church are:

James W. Martin	Thomas Vinson
James Hester	Russell H. Johnson, Jr.

Time Line & Bulletins

- 1905** Seventy-seven charter members formed Conway Baptist Church
- 1906** Rev. Jesse McCarter called as first pastor
- 1907** Rev. W. B. Waff called as pastor
First church built
- 1910** Debt cancelled and dedication service held for first church building
- 1915** Rev. Jesse Blalock called as pastor
- 1917** Ordination of R. Kelly White and Paul Sykes
- 1919** Rev. J. W. Downey called as pastor
Baptistery installed
- 1925** Rev. A.W.H. Jones called as pastor
- 1929** Sunday School enlargement campaign held and annex built
- 1930** Twenty-fifth anniversary
- 1931** Dr. William R. Burrell called as pastor
- 1934** Dr. J. C. Owen called as pastor
- 1935** Dr. J. H. Bunn called as pastor
- 1936** Sunday School annex note paid and note burning ceremony held
- 1940** First budget adopted of \$2,337.00
- 1941** Rev. Lonnie Sasser called as pastor
- 1943** Plans and building fund started for new church building
- 1946** Church reaffirmed covenant prohibiting sale of strong drink
- 1948** Plans accepted for new church building
- 1949** Building begun of new church building
- 1950** Ordination of Benny Pledger
Congregation met in new church building
- 1952** Debt for new church paid in full
- 1953** Dedication and note burning ceremony for new church building
- 1955** James F. Martin resigned as clerk after 50 years of service
- 1960** Congregation voted to become a full time church
Parsonage built in anticipation of full time pastor
- 1961** Rev. Donald J. Dunlap called as pastor
Budget of \$9,300.00
- 1962** Long Range Planning Committee Formed
- 1963** New Boards Formed: Deacons, Trustees, Christian Ed. & Missions

- 1964** Wedding of Rev. Donald J. Dunlap and Kay Francis
- 1965** Improvements made to front of sanctuary
Sixtieth anniversary
- 1966** Library dedicated to Rev. Donald J. Dunlap
Rev. Russell L. Wimmer called as pastor
- 1968** Sanctuary air-conditioned
- 1969** Rev. Walter S. Jones called as pastor
Summer youth directors hired for three summers
- 1970** History committee formed
- 1971** First pictorial directory
- 1972** Handbells purchased
Budget \$32,468
- 1975** Allen Organ purchased
- 1976** Organ dedicated to Caroline L. Fleetwood
- 1977** Rev. Jess Willard (Tommy) Crosswhite called as pastor.
- 1979** Rev. James E. Hester called as pastor
Mrs. Gertrude Lanier resigned as treasurer (served 35 years)
Mrs. Myrld Woodard resigned as financial sec. (served 35 yrs.)
Positions of secretary, treasurer and financial secretary combined
Mrs. Stewart Taylor hired as church secretary
- 1980** Affirmative vote allowing women to serve as deacons
Seventy-fifth anniversary
Elevator Fund started
Second pictorial directory
- 1981** First annual homecoming day held
Church bus purchased
- 1982** Chairlift installed
James Hester Class formed
- 1983** Constitution and Bylaws adopted
BYW Group formed
First full time secretary (Jackie Duncan)
- 1984** First women served on Board of Deacons
Last surviving charter member died
- 1985** Groundbreaking for fellowship hall and office addition
- 1986** Dedication of new addition
WMU celebrated 100th birthday
Service held honoring Caroline L. Fleetwood (58 years of service)
Revival service "Good News America, God Loves You"
- 1987** Meals on Wheels distribution began

- 1988** Old Fellowship Hall divided into classrooms
Third pictorial directory
- 1989** Bible Drill first organized
- 1990** Note burning ceremony for new addition
Puppet Ministry begun
Incorporation of Church
Endowment scholarships established for Chowan & Campbell
- 1991** New sound system installed
- 1992** Vote to hold Homecoming on 3rd yr. Harvest Day 1st & 2nd yr.
- 1994** Carillons purchased in memory of Caroline L. Fleetwood
“First Place” weight class held
Computer first used by church office
- 1995** Groundbreaking for elevator
Ninetieth anniversary
Fourth pictorial directory
- 1997** Note burning ceremony for elevator
Gail Martin hired as part time secretary
Dianna Sumner’s mission trip to El Salvador
Rev. Thomas H. Caulkins served as interim pastor
- 1998** Rev. Willie A. McLawhorn called as pastor
Pearl Brown hired as secretary
Gail Martin honored for leading Children’s Choir for 20 yrs.
- 1999** Current youth group sponsored first annual fundraiser.
- 2000** First van purchased
Phillip Ricks Class formed
Circle of Faith formed
- 2001** Second van purchased
New parking lot paved behind parsonage
- 2002** Randall Martin won National Bible Drill competition
Centennial Committee formed
- 2003** Youth director hired (George Collins)
- 2004** New sound system, projector and screen
Bobby Taylor’s mission trip to Quebec
Alice Woodard resigned as recording sec. (42 yrs. of service)
Centennial Kickoff
Fifth pictorial directory
- 2005** Connie Vann’s mission trip to Quebec
Fourteen youth and four adults participated in World Changers
Budget of \$188,165.00
Michelle Burgess hired as part-time secretary

Conway Baptist Church
Worship Service 90th Anniversary
 October 8, 1995

Prelude		When We All Get to Heaven
Call to Worship		The Lord Is My Tower
Invocation		
Special Music	I Bowed on My Knees and Cried Holy Bennie and Paula Barrett, Pam Cox and Gary Felton	
Puppet Message		
Welcome and Announcements		
Recognition of Guests		
Special Presentation by Trustees		Michael Belch
Prayer		
Grace, Love and Fellowship		
Remarks from the Historical Committee		Jean Ricks
Fellowship Song	The Family of God	386
Offertory Prayer		
Offertory		Where He Leads I'll Go Handbell Quartet
Doxology		
Recognition of Former Pastors		
Anthem	Walking with Jesus	Sanctuary Choir
Scripture		Luke 9:62
Message		You Can't Plow Looking Back
Hymn #472	Satisfied with Jesus	
Benediction and Blessing		Let There Be Peace on Earth
Organ Postlude		
Dedication of Elevator (outside)		Ella Mae Futrell
Ribbon Cutters		Lloyd Futrell

Church Directory

Pastor
Secretary
Housekeeper
Music Director
Assistant Music Director
Organist
Assistant Organist
Pianist
Recording Secretary
Sunday School Director
WMU Director
Kitchen Committee
Nominating Committee

Flower Committee

Baptismal Committee

Social Committee

Historical Committee

Rev. James E. Hester
Jackie Duncan
Juanita Britt
Pam Cox
Gail Martin
Wanda Taylor
Paula Barrett
Pam Woodard
Alice Woodard
Phillip Ricks
Kathleen Johnson
Pearl Nelson
Teena Woodard
J. D. Simmons
Emmie Martin
Lillie Mae Watson
Teena Woodard
Clonnie Reynolds
Peggy Davis
Jesse Nelson
Bennie and Lori Barnes
. D. and Janet Simmons
Albert and Margaret Vann
Jean Ricks
Alice Woodard
Peggy Davis

Board of Deacons

Linwood Coggins
Johnny Reynolds
Frank Richey, Jr.
Phillip Ricks

Joe Barrett
Peggy Davis
James Martin
Jean Ricks

David Simmons
Willie Mae Johnson
Sandra Vann
Laurie Vann

Board of Trustees

Mike Belch
Sadie Bridgers
Jeff Daughtry

Twyla Duke
Kelly Vann
Myrld Woodard

R. J. White, III
Bennie Barrett
Douglas Blowe

Ushers

Fletcher Bryant
R. J. White, III

Joe Martin
Kelly Vann

Phil Davis
Albert Vann

**Conway Baptist Church
1905-1980
Seventy-Fifth Anniversary**

Rev. James E. Hester

October 12, 1980

10:30	Prelude	"Sanctus"	Gounod
	Choral Call to Worship		Children's Choir
	Invocation	"Pass It On"	Pastor
	Hymn	"O God, Our Help in Ages Past	286
10:40		Acteens	Puppet Show
	Rev. Bennie Pledger		
11:00	Hymn	"All Hail the Power of Jesus Name"	134
	Welcome		Pastor
	Pastoral Prayer		Choral Response #545
11:05	Rev. Donald Dunlap		
11:15	Reading of the History		Mr. Jennings White
11:25	Hymn	"Glorious Is Thy Name"	138
	Offertory	"Bless This House"	Brahe
11:40	Director of Missions		Rev. Henry Powell
	Introduction of Speaker		Pastor
	Anthem		Sanctuary Choir
		"People of the World Rejoice"	
11:50	Rev. Roy Smith		
	Hymn	"Blest Be the Tie	366
12:20	Benediction		Choral Amen 541
	Postlude	"Golden Sonata"	Purcell
12:30	Lunch		

Church Directory

Pastor: Rev. James E. Hester

Music Director: Mrs. Julian Liverman

Sexton: Mr. L. G. Britt, Jr.

Clerk: Mr. J. Raynor Woodard

Sunday School Director:

Recording Secretary:

Organist: Mr. Russ Johnson

Organist: Mrs. J. A. Fleetwood, Sr.

Pianist: Mrs. S. D. Hedspeth, Jr.

Mr. Stewart Taylor

Mrs. Linwood Woodard

The Board of Deacons

Mr. James Martin, Chairman

Mr. R. H. Johnson, Jr.

Mr. S. D. Hedspeth, Jr.

Mr. William Johnson

Mr. Jimmy Woodard

Mr. Freddie Carroll

Mr. Lee Duncan

Mr. Dewey Edwards

Mr. Fletcher Bryant

Mr. Ed Rawls

Mr. R. Jennings White

Mr. A. O. Woodard, Jr.

The Board of Trustees

Mr. Lawrence Ricks

Mr. Billy Joyner

Mr. Linwood Woodard

Mr. C. J. Watson

Mr. Billy Driggins

Mrs. Johnny Reynolds

Mr. Lokie Nelson

Mrs. Leroy Taylor

Mr. Randolph Burgess

The Board of Missions

Mrs. Lawrence Ricks

Mr. Billy V. Davis

Mr. Lee Brittle

Mrs. James Martin

Mrs. Randolph Burgess, WMU Director

Mr. Roger Bryant

Mrs. S. D. Hedspeth, Jr.

The Nominating Committee

Mrs. Edward James

Mrs. Jimmy Woodard

Mr. Julian Liverman

The Communion Committee

Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Simmons

Mr. and Mrs. Kelly Vann

The Flower Committee

Mrs. George Francis

Mrs. Haywood Davis

Kitchen Committee

Mrs. Stewart Taylor

The Baptismal Committee

Mr. and Mrs. James Nelson

The Social Committee

Mrs. Lee Brittle

Mrs. Raynor Woodard

Mrs. Randolph Turner

Sixtieth Anniversary Service

The Order of Worship

October 10, 1965

Organ Prelude	"Siciliano"	Bach
*The Processional Hymn	God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand"	#240
*The Pastoral Call To Worship		
*The Invocation		
*The Lord's Prayer		
*Choral Response		#529
Welcome To Worship	Announcements and Church Calendar	
Anthem	"All Creatures of Our God and King"	Cherub Choir
Our Historical Records		John Woodard
Greetings From Former Pastors		
Recognition of Special Guests		
In Honor of Our Charter Members		
Memorial For Our Brethren Departed		
Anthem	"O Lord We Worship Thee"	Carol Choir
The Scripture Reading		Luke 4:14-21
The Pastoral Prayer		
Choral Response		531
*The Offertory Hymn	"I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord"	196
*The Offertory Prayer		
Organ Offertory	"Ave Maria"	Schubert
Introduction of Guest Minister, Dr. W. Perry Crouch		
Anthem	"The Heavens Are Telling"	Church Choir
The Sermon	REDISCOVERING THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH	
*The Recessional Hymn	"Lead On, O King Eternal"	236
*The Benediction and Blessing of the Meal		
*Choral Amen		
Organ Postlude	"In Festive Mood"	Scarmolin

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Donald J. Dunlap
Minister

Secretary- Mrs. Virginia B. Futrell

Sexton-David Simmons

Church Officers

Clerk-J. Raynor Woodard

Rep. to Assoc. Ex. Comm-R. H. Johnson, Jr.

Asst. Clerk-A. O. Woodard, Jr.

Conference Secretary-Mrs. Linwood Woodard

Custodian-A. O. Woodard, Sr.

Treasurer-Mrs. J. D. Lanier

Asst. Custodian-S. D. Hedspeth, Jr.

Financial Secretary-Mrs. K. B. Woodard

The Board of Deacons

C. Wilson Bridgers

S. D. Hedspeth, Jr.

Haywood Davis

Lee Brittle

William D. Johnson

Grady Martin

Julian D. Liverman

Lloyd R. Ricks

Lawrence W. Ricks

William Vann

A. O. Woodard, Jr.

Laurie J. Vann

Music

Mrs. Julian D. Liverman, Choir Director

Mrs. J. A. Fleetwood, Sr., Organist

The Board of Trustees

Wayland Long

Edward James

Russell H. Johnson, Jr.

C. J. Watson

Sidney Edwards

Clifton A. Davis, Sr.

The Board of Christian Education

Mrs. Julian Bridgers

Mrs. Bernard Deloatch

Mrs. Gay Flythe

Henry Vick

Linwood Woodard

Jim G. Vick

Sunday School Superintendent

Vacation Bible School Principal

R. Jennings White, Jr.

Mrs. Fletcher Bryant

Training Union Director

Denny Vann

The Board of Missions

Mrs. Thelma Blythe

Mrs. Annie Lois Hedspeth

Mrs. Mable Parke

C. Harold Britt

Randolph Burgess

M. Earl Martin

Mrs. V. G. Shearin-President of the Women's Mission Union

The Nominating Committee

J. Raynor Woodard

Bernard Deloatch

Mrs. D. Macon Woodard

Conway Baptist Church
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1953
Dedication Service

Organ Prelude

Doxology

Invocation and Response

Hymn 86

For the Beauty of the Earth

Presentation of Building to Church Free of Debt

Clifton Davis

Burning of Notes

J. M. Vick, J. R. Woodard, A. O. Woodard, Sr.

History

R. Jennings White, Sr.

Dedication:

Pastor: I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.

Congregation: Unto God our Heavenly Father, unto Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, unto the Holy Spirit our Guide and Comforter, we dedicate these buildings.

Pastor: The tribes go up even the tribes of the Lord to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.

Congregation: Unto God our Heavenly Father, unto Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, unto the Holy Spirit our Guide and Comforter, we dedicate these buildings.

Pastor: Blessed be the Lord who spoke with His mouth and with His hands fulfilled it.

Congregation: Unto God our Heavenly Father, unto Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, unto the Holy Spirit our Guide and Comforter, we dedicate these buildings.

Pastor: O my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open and let thine ears be attent unto the prayers that are made in this place.

Congregation: Unto God our Heavenly Father, unto Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, unto the Holy Spirit our Guide and Comforter, we dedicate these buildings.

Pastor: Blessed are they that dwell in thy house. They will still be praising thee.

Congregation: Unto God our Heavenly Father, unto Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, unto the Holy Spirit our Guide and Comforter, we dedicate these buildings.

Pastor: Passing through the valley of weeping they make it a place of springs; yea, the early rain covereth it with blessing.

Congregation: Unto God our Heavenly Father, unto Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, unto the Holy Spirit our Guide and Comforter, we dedicate these buildings.

Pastor: A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Congregation: Unto God our Heavenly Father, unto Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, unto the Holy Spirit our Guide and Comforter, we dedicate these buildings.

Pastor: We have thought on thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

Congregation: Unto God our Heavenly Father, unto Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, unto the Holy Spirit our Guide and Comforter, we dedicate these buildings.

Pastor: One thing have I asked of the Lord, and that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple. For in the day of trouble He will keep me secretly in His pavilion; in the covert of His Tabernacle will He hide me. He will lift me up upon a rock.

Congregation: Unto God our Heavenly Father, unto Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, unto the Holy Spirit our Guide and Comforter, we dedicate these buildings.

Prayer of Dedication

Hymn 103 I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord.

Announcements

Special Music Youth and Senior Choirs

Message “My Church” Dr. F. O. Mixon, Chowan College

Closing Hymn 418 Faith of Our Fathers

Benediction

Organ Postlude

Officers and Teachers 1953

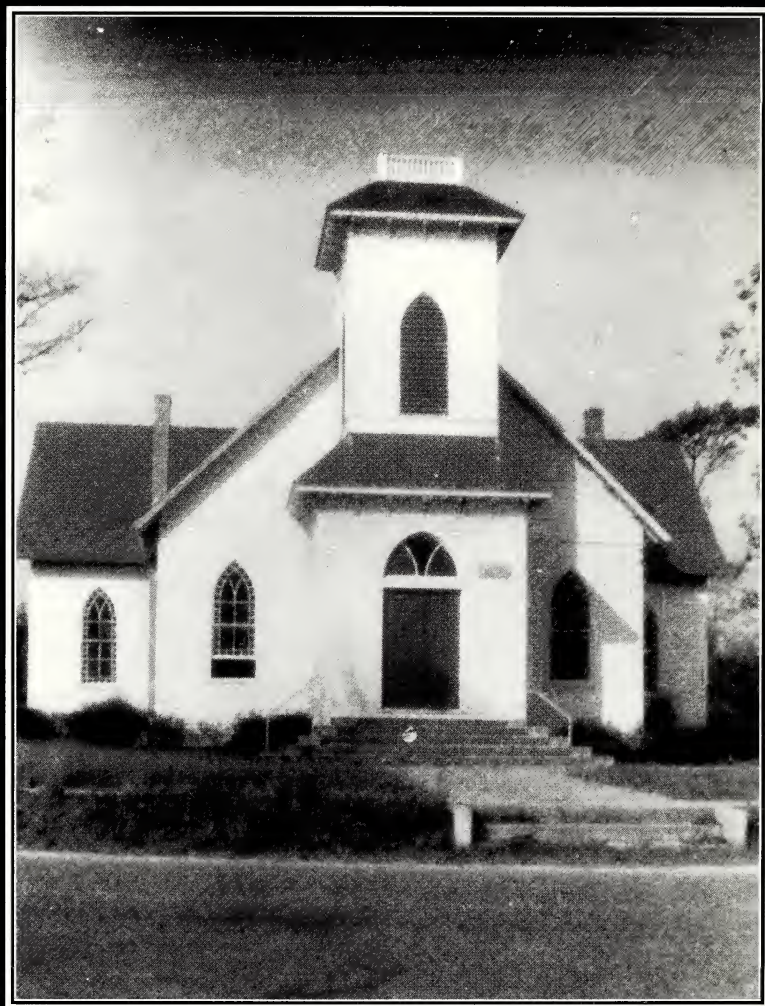
Pastor		Rev. Lonnie Sasser
Deacons	J. F. Martin	J. R. Woodard
	C. W. Britt	J. Henry Vick
	R. V. Nelson	S. D. Hedspeth, Jr.
	Lloyd Ricks	James W. Martin
	R. Jennings White, Sr.	A. O. Woodard, Jr.
Superintendent		Lawrence Ricks
Secretary		J. C. Davis
Treasurer		Mrs. J. D. Lanier
Organist		Mrs. J. A. Fleetwood
Choir Director		Mrs. Julian Liverman
Librarian		Miss Pat Parke
Extension Department		Mrs. J. R. Woodard, Mrs. Macon Woodard
Adult Department		
Superintendent	Mr. E. C. Vick	
Secretary	Mr. C. S. Deloatch	
Teachers		
Bible Class		Mr. R. V. Nelson
Fellowship Class		Mr. R. Jennings White
Eva Britton		Mrs. L. W. Hedspeth
Kelly White		Mrs. R. Jennings White, Sr.
Lonnie Sasser		Mr. Wilson Outterbridge
Friendly		Mrs. C. S. Deloatch
Goodwill Bible Class		Mr. S. D. Hedspeth, Jr.
Young Men's Class		Mr. George Evans
Ruth Class		Mrs. Gay Flythe
Intermediate Department		
Superintendent	Mr. Julian Liverman	
Teachers	Mrs. David Vann, Mr. Wilson Bridgers	
Junior Department		
Superintendent	Mrs. J. H. Vick	
Teachers	Mrs. J. C. Davis, Mr. William Johnson	
Primary Department		
Superintendent	Mrs. Lee Brittle	
Teachers	Mrs. Elliott Futrell, Miss Cary Davis, Mrs. Jesse Futrell	
Beginners	Mrs. A. O. Woodard, Jr.	
Nursery	Mrs. Otis Spence, Mrs. Wayland Long, Mrs. Edward James, Mrs. Harry Jenkins, Miss Ella Mae Barnes	

Woman's Missionary Union

(Seven Circles and Four Young People's Auxiliaries)

President	Mrs. J. A. Fleetwood	Sunbeams	Mrs. Abner Lassiter
Vice President	Mrs. Gay Flythe	Co-Leaders	Mrs. George Francis
Secretary	Miss. Dorothy Francis	G.A. Leader	Mrs. L. W. Hedspeth
Treasurer	Mrs. Linford Blythe	R.A. Leader	Mr. William Johnson
Pianist	Mrs. R. Jennings White	YWA Leader	Mrs. Lawrence Ricks
	BTU	Miss Onita Woodard	

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Conway Baptist Church

Established in 1905